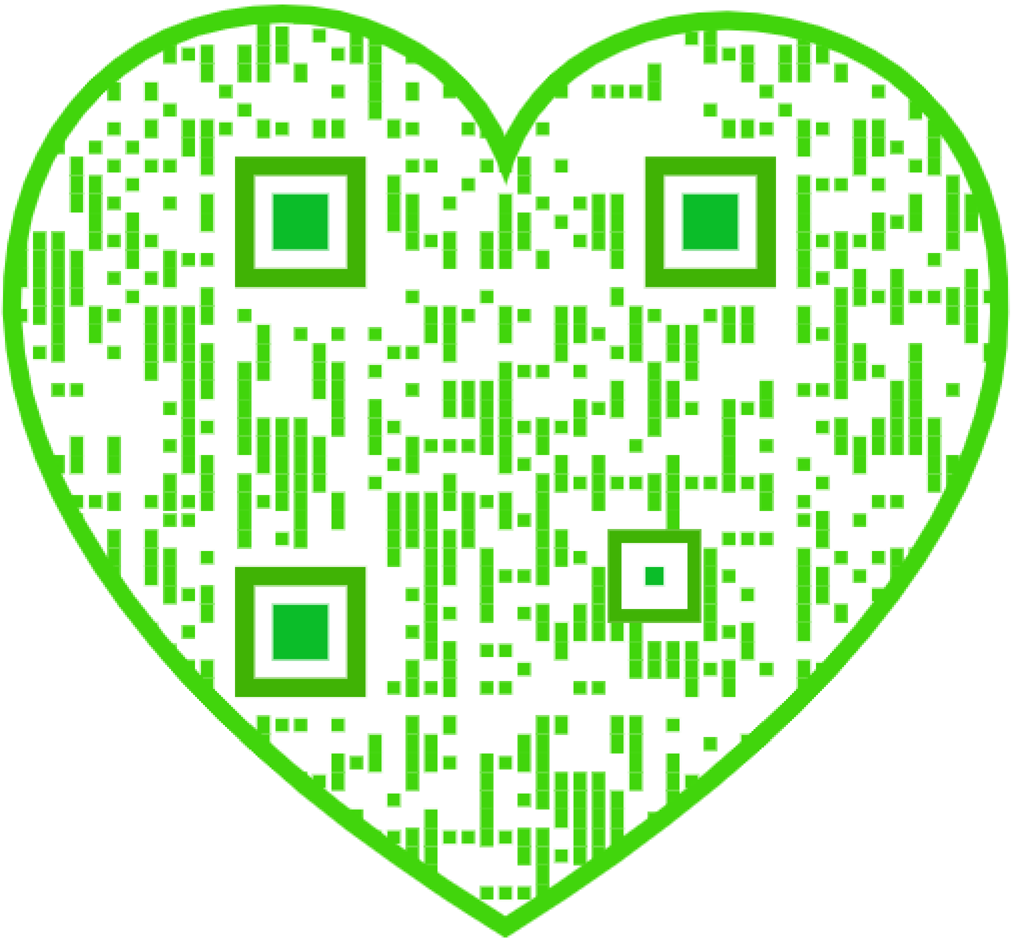
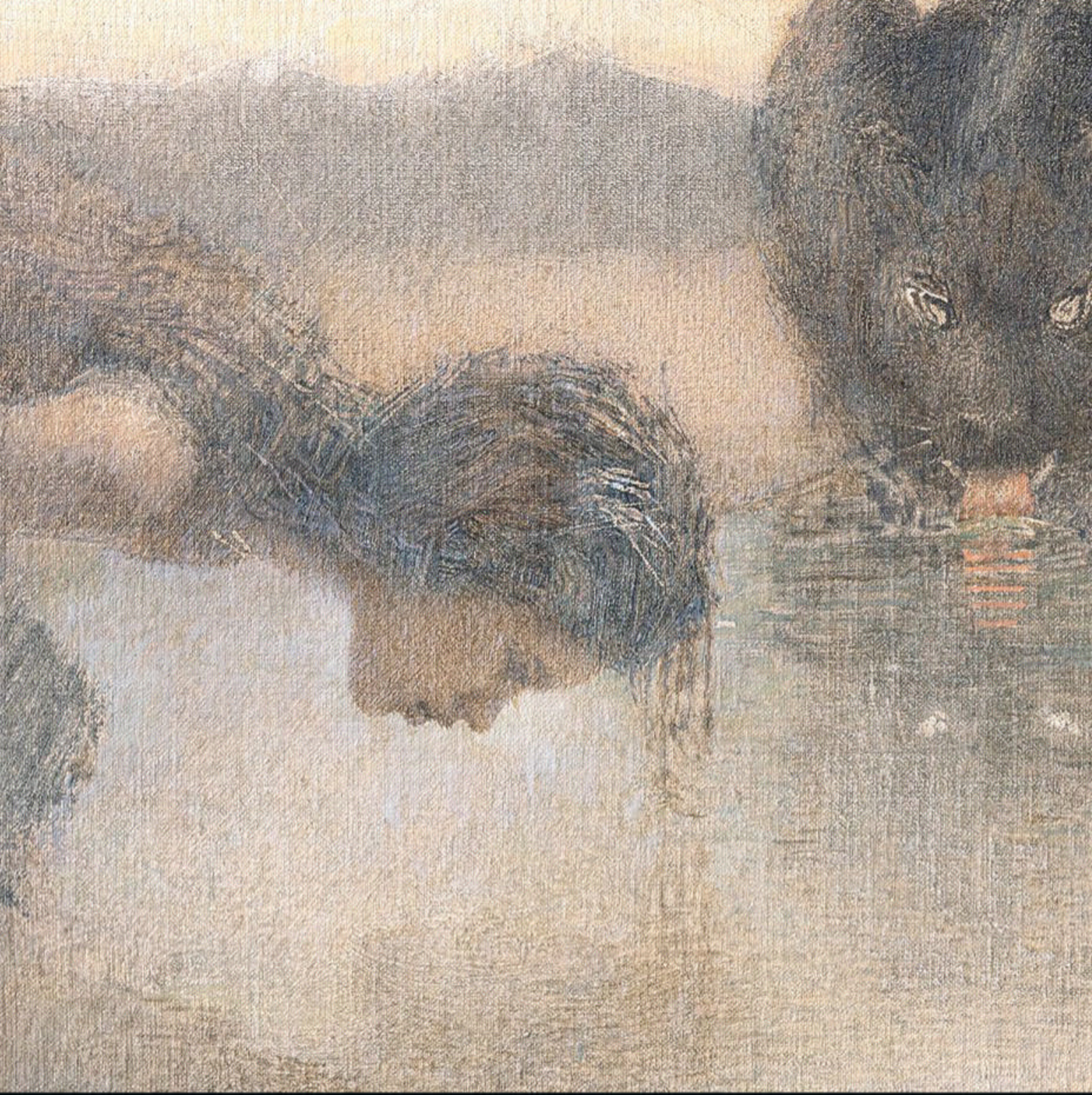
INSIDE ART LOVER'S GUIDE TO SANTA FE • MICAH OFSTEDAHL • WILDLIFE • VINCENT GIARRANO • ALAN BRAY

MAY 2025 **ISSUE 235**

AMERICAN art COLLECTOR





DANIEL BILMES

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May 15 - 30, 2025

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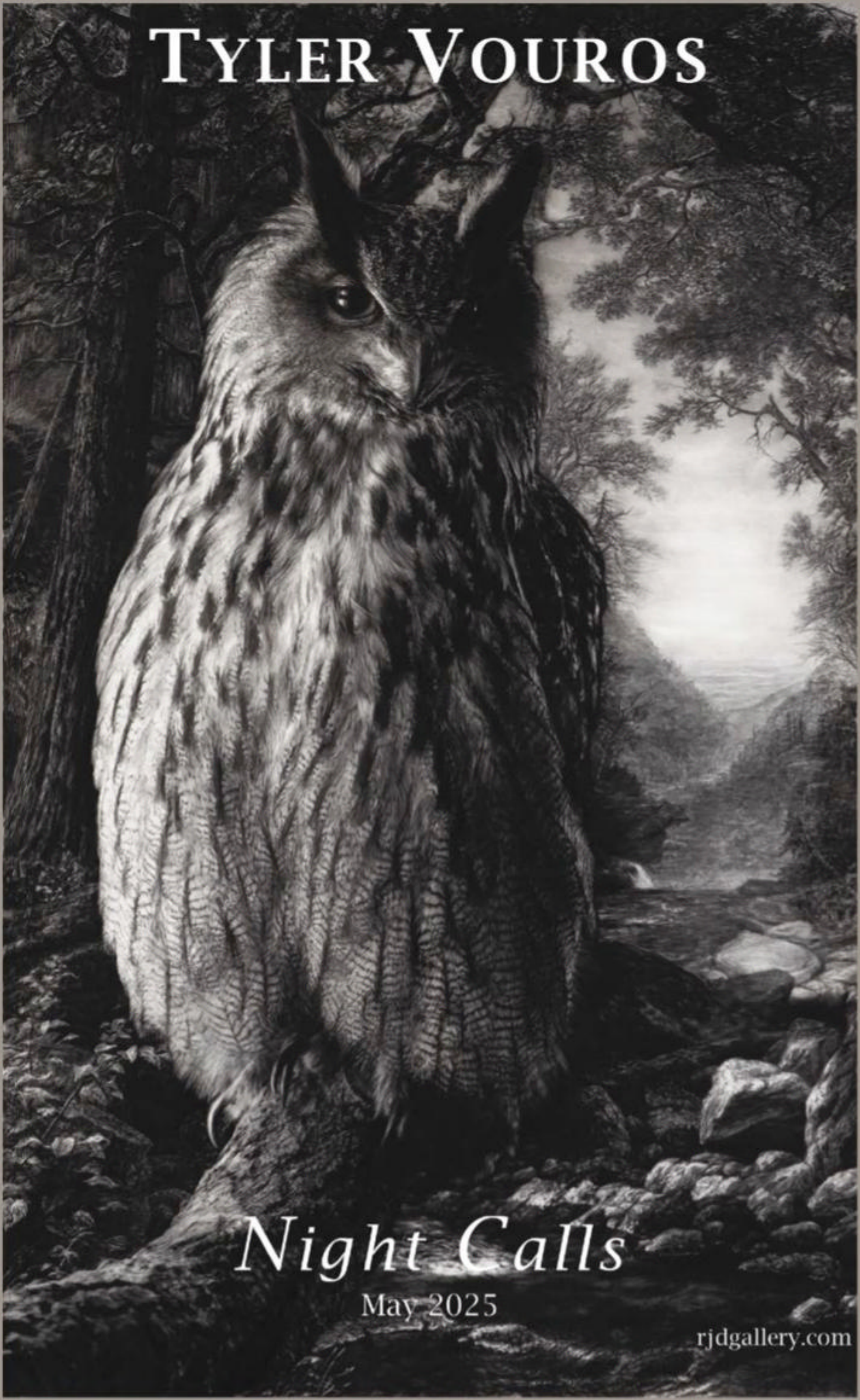
TYLER VOUROS

Tyler Vouros, *Lila (Eurasian Eagle Owl)*, charcoal and water mounted on deep canvas, 90 x 56 in

rjdgallery.com



TYLER VOUROS

Night Calls

May 2025

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Tyler Vouros, *Lila (Eurasian Eagle Owl)*, charcoal and water mounted on deep canvas, 90 x 56 in

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Art Finds You

Welcome to the May issue of *American Art Collector*! Each month we highlight a destination and this month we bring you our Art Lovers Guide to Santa Fe. Santa Fe is just brimming with art. In fact, there are 200-plus galleries in the City Different and many more statewide. You can feel the presence of art everywhere in the Land of Enchantment. Our team is in Santa Fe multiple times a year because there is so much going on there in the art world. The state's best of the best galleries for contemporary realism are inside these pages, waiting for you to discover, starting on Page 60. We have suggestions for everything to do in the area and if you have questions, email or call us—we'd be happy to provide even more recommendations! Insider tip: If you see something you like, call the gallery immediately as art collecting is competitive in New Mexico!

This month, we also have *three* Collectors Focuses for you: Wildlife, Art of the Horse, and Wild at Heart. These features are created monthly to help you zoom in on one genre at a time, and make your artwork selection easier. We know you will find art you love in our pages and when you do, we want to help you curate your unique and beautiful collections, and introduce you to the galleries who are your greatest resource. We have more than a dozen gallery and art show previews in this issue, showcasing more than 200 exceptional artists.

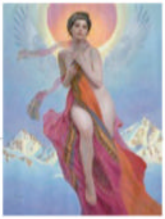
As we enter into the summer months, museums are blossoming with new, inspiring exhibitions. This month we spotlight *Rising Voices 4: The Bennett Prize for Women Figurative Realist Painters*, whose 2025 winner will be announced this month. This is one of many great stories in this issue, so why not dive in? The journey awaits you and we are here to help the art find you!

The International Artist Publishing team was out in full force for *Scottsdale Ferrari Artweek* in March. The inaugural event drew more than 100 leading galleries from all over the country and beyond, and thousands of visitors. Visit www.scottsdaleartweek.com to learn more and don't miss next year's event!

Wendie Martin Adolfo Castillo

Wendie Martin and Adolfo Castillo
Publishers

ON THE COVER



Mian Situ, *Snowy Mountain*, oil, 68 x 51". Available at Sanders Galleries, Tucson, AZ. **See our coverage on Page 36**.

International Artist Publishing — *Since 1998*

AMERICAN art COLLECTOR

MAY 2025 / MONTHLY

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Coca-Cola
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HATS

ARTWORK DETAILS - Miles Glynn : *Giants No. 37* ; Geoffrey Gersten : *Cowboy Cacophony* ; David Frederick Riley : *Higher Ground*

"If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint."
- Edward Hopper

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Bursting at the Seams

Hello artists, galleries, collectors, art fair and exhibition organizers, and all of you who read this magazine because you want to know what's happening in the art world, or simply because you appreciate the visual arts and the stories of those who make it. Or maybe it's more specific—someone you know is featured in this issue and, excited for them, you are reading our magazine for the very first time (welcome!). I'm sure there are other reasons for reading *American Art Collector*, but whatever led you to be holding this magazine in your hands, we hope it goes beyond satisfying your initial purpose. Our goal is to stimulate you visually and intellectually, and provide the practical information you need to plan art-rich adventures and experiences, and fill your calendars all year long. And beneath all of those objectives, is *American Art Collector*'s primary raison d'être—to connect art lovers with the piece(s) they cannot live without.

At nearly 140 pages and overflowing with such diverse content, I'm pretty sure the May issue has all of the bases covered. Artists, you are on every singe page in this issue, and every issue. With 11 coast-to-coast previews of gallery and museum exhibitions, and the low-down on four major events, you've got plenty of things to see and do. Then we have put together our off-the-beaten-path guide to Santa Fe, more than 15 pages of the inside scoop on the area's best galleries, artists and events—and so much more.

Visually, from our fascinating features on three very different artists at different stages of their careers with unique stories to tell; to a three-part section dedicated to wildlife, horses and pets, we think we have a pretty good shot at our ultimate goal too—to connect artists (and galleries) with collectors; and those who want to invest in art with the art they want to collect.

Let us know if we've succeeded and enjoy the May issue!

Sarah Gianelli

Sarah Gianelli
Managing Editor
sgianelli@americanartcollector.com

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AMERICAN art COLLECTOR

MAY 2025 / MONTHLY

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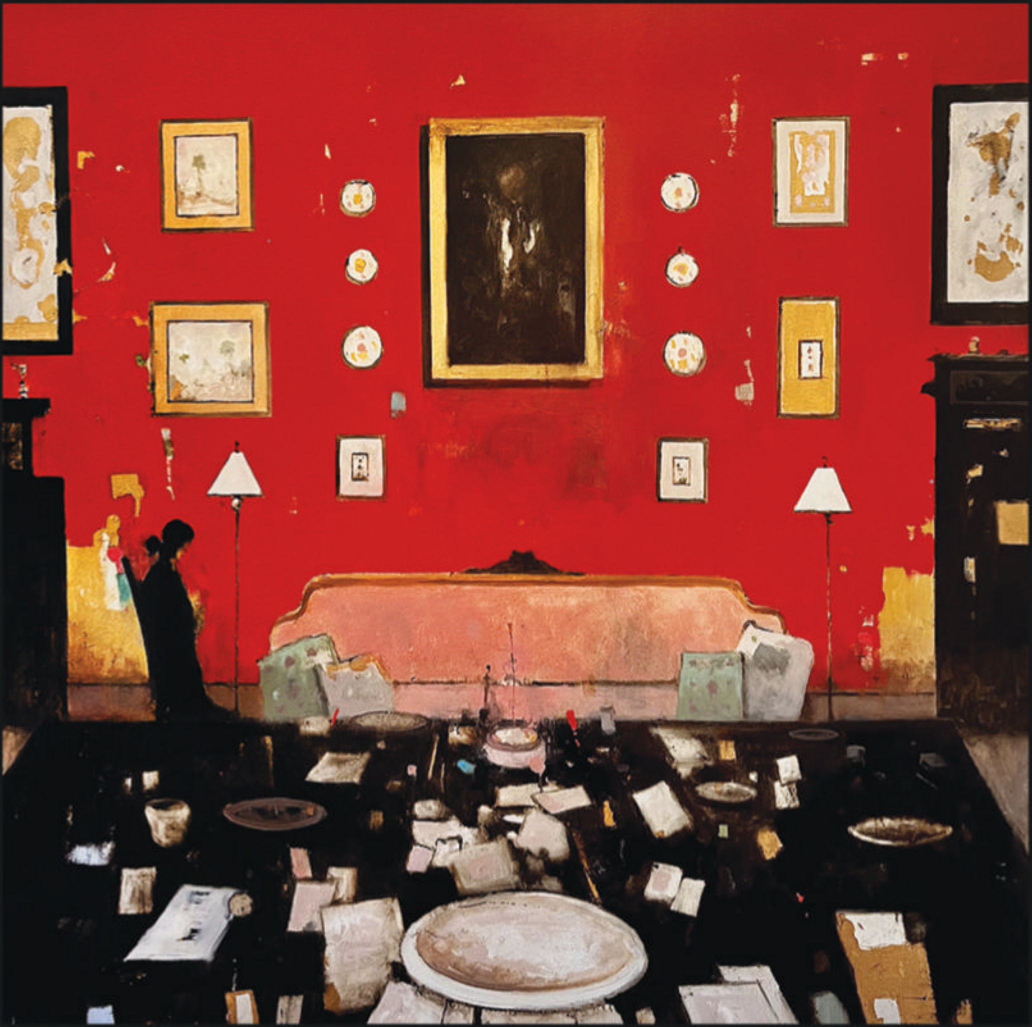

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ON EXHIBIT 5.16.2025

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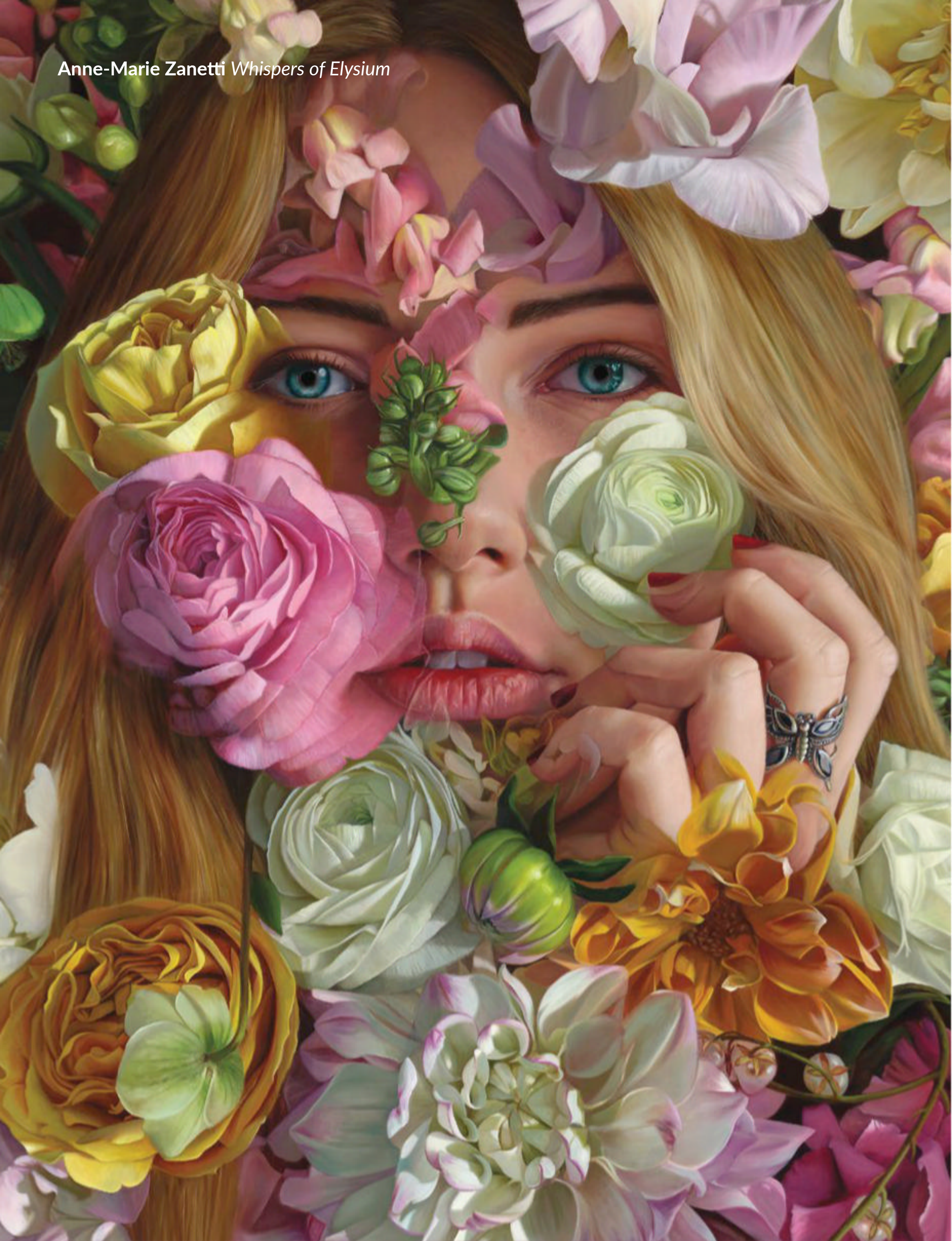
Anne-Marie Zanetti *Whispers of Elysium*



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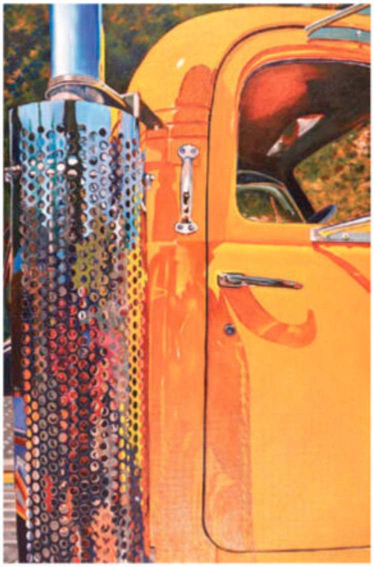
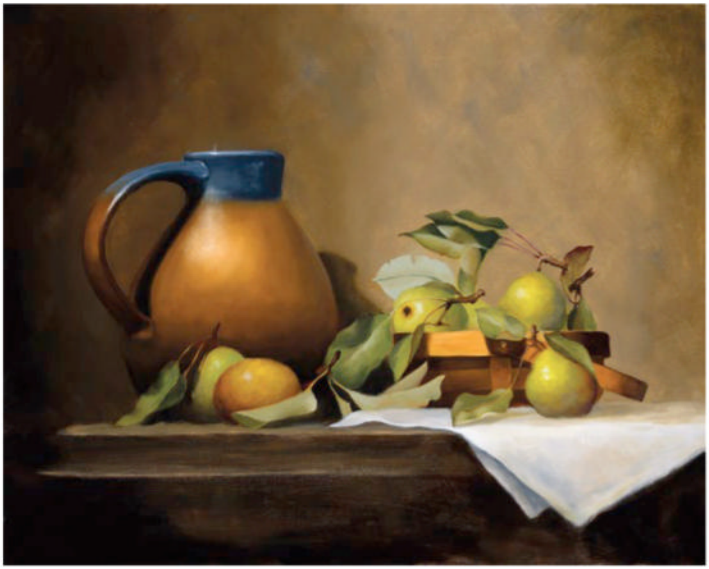


Tom Mewborn | *Yellow Mack B61 #1*
36x48 in. | oil | $6,000
tmewborn@gmail.com



Patricia Tribastone | *Pear Harvest*
16x20 in. | oil | $2,200
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NOAPS 2025 Exhibitions

BEST OF AMERICA SMALL WORKS INTERNATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION

MAY 9-30, 2025 | Eisele Gallery, Cincinnati Ohio
Opening Reception May 9, 2025, 6-9 p.m.

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SPRING ONLINE INTERNATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION

Published on NOAPS website MAY 22, 2025

ASSOCIATE ONLINE INTERNATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION

Open for entries: APRIL 14 - JUNE 11, 2025
Published on NOAPS website JUNE 30, 2025

BEST OF AMERICA INTERNATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION

Open for Entries MAY 19 - AUGUST 6, 2025
Exhibition OCTOBER 2-25, 2025 | James R. Ross Gallery, Indianapolis, IN
Opening Reception OCTOBER 2, 2025, 5-8 p.m.

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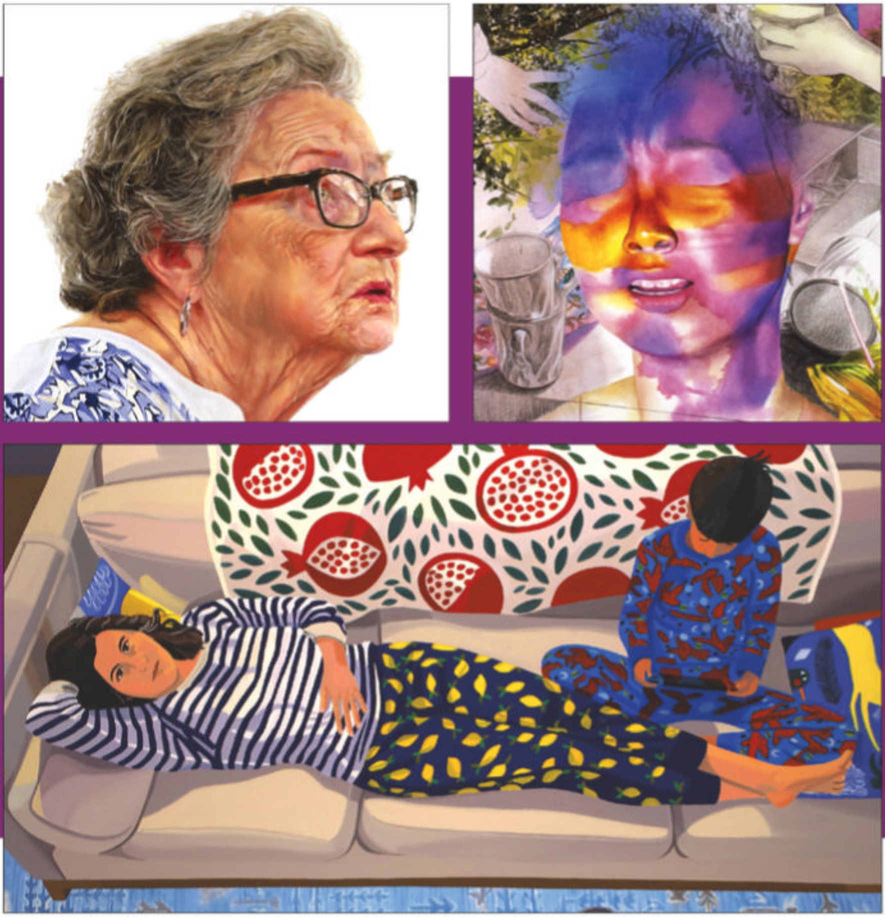
RISING VOICES 4

Exhibition & Sale



BENNETT PRIZE® 4 FINALISTS: (Clockwise, top left) **Amy Werntz**, *QE III* (detail), 2021; **Ambrin Ling**, *The Craved* (detail), 2023; **Helena Wurzel**, *In the Middle* (detail), 2024

May 15 - August 24, 2025

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For full details, including more information on each of the 10 finalists, please visit: ***thebennettprize.org.***

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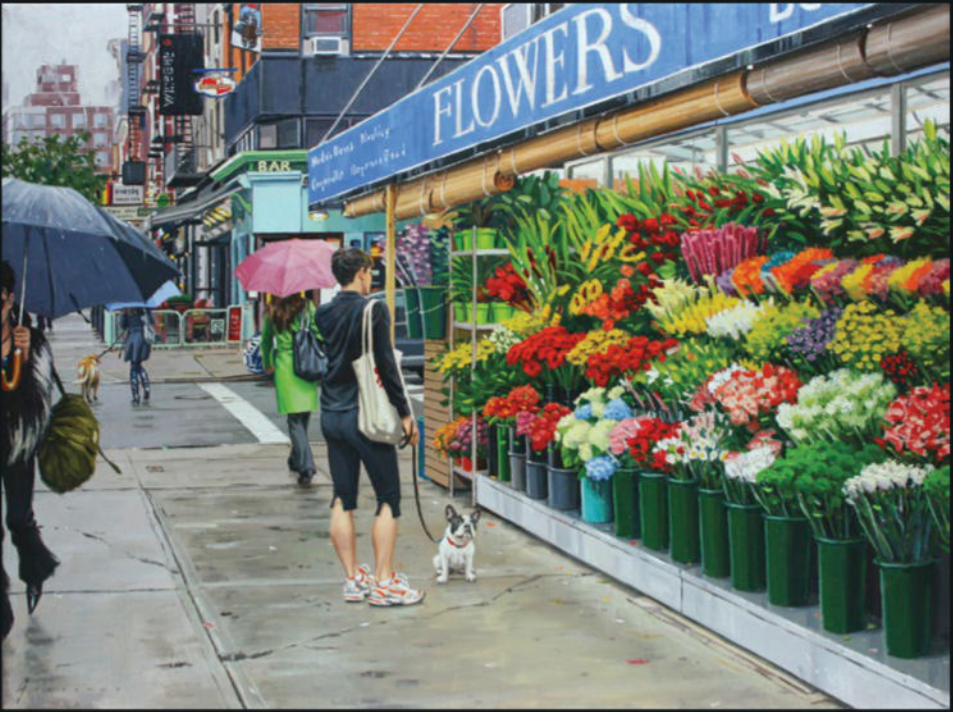
Background Map: Maggi Sarfaty
"Moosesm" Cynthie Fisher
"Oyster Catcher, Oyster Can" Joe Seme

MSAC

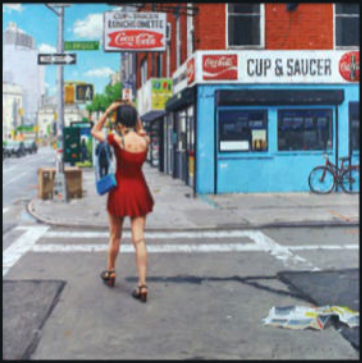
Vincent Giarrano

CITY COLOR

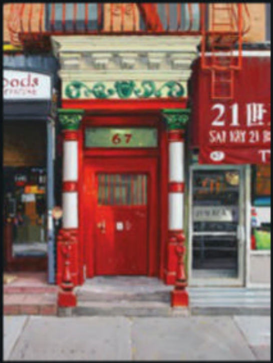
May 2 to May 31, 2025


FLOWERS
BAR

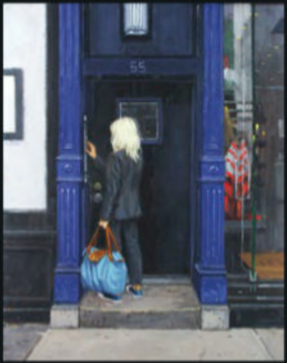
Flower Stand Oil 18 x 24"


CUP & SAUCER
Coca-Cola
LUNCHEONETTE

Cup and Saucer, Oil 18 x 18"



Red Doorway in Chinatown, Oil 12 x 9"



Purple Doorway in Soho, Oil 18 x 14"

Susan Powell Fine Art

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View works at: www.susanpowellfineart.com

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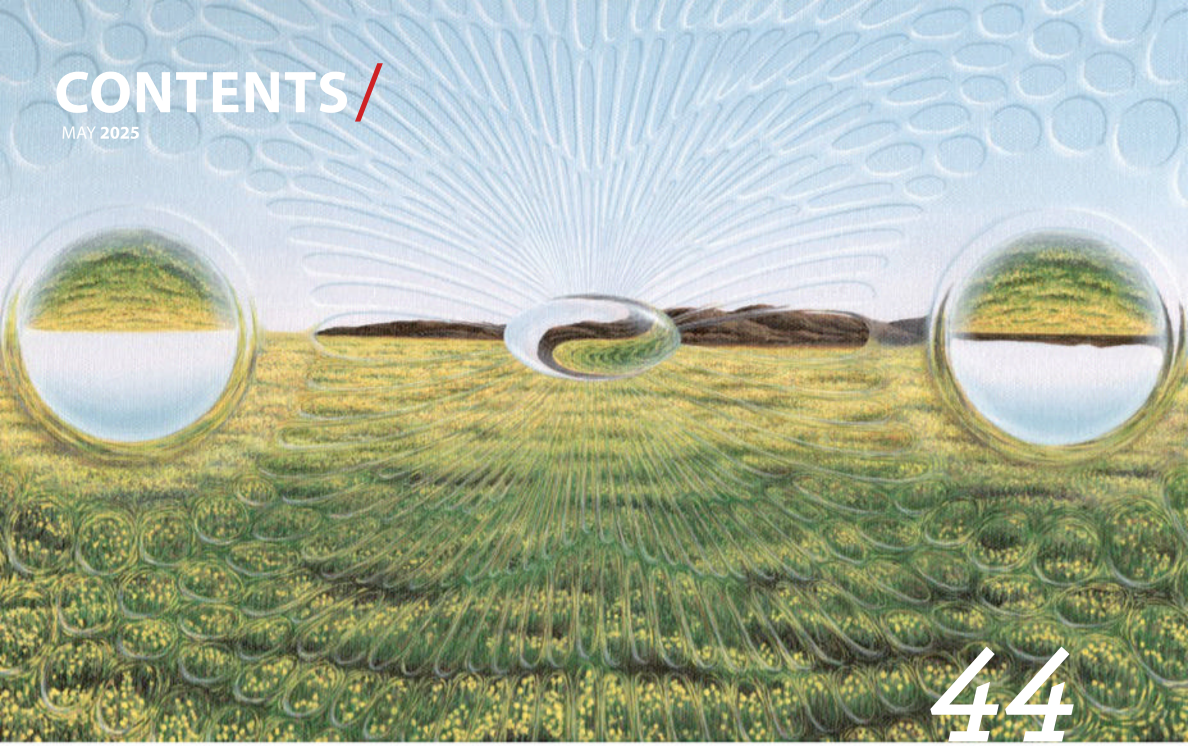

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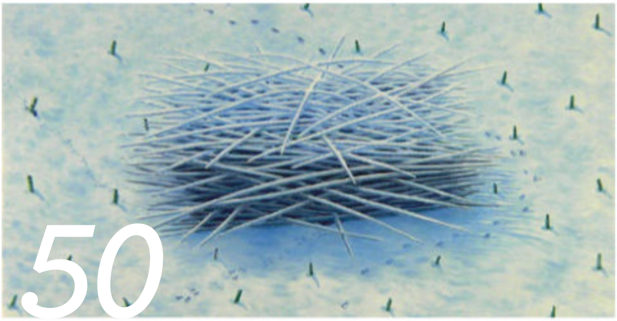

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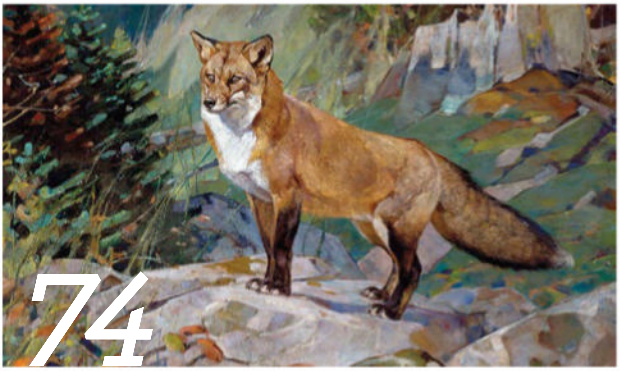
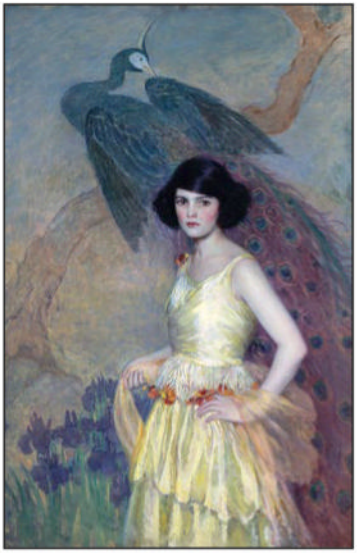


The F. Edwin Church (1876-1975) Catalogue Raisonné Project
Announces the 50th Anniversary Retrospective of Church's Art at the North Shore Historical Museum



Girl in Yellow, c.1920
Oil on canvas, 60 x 40 inches

See the gallery dedicated to Church in Deco at 100

NASSAU COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

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Revealing F. Edwin Church, American Impressionist
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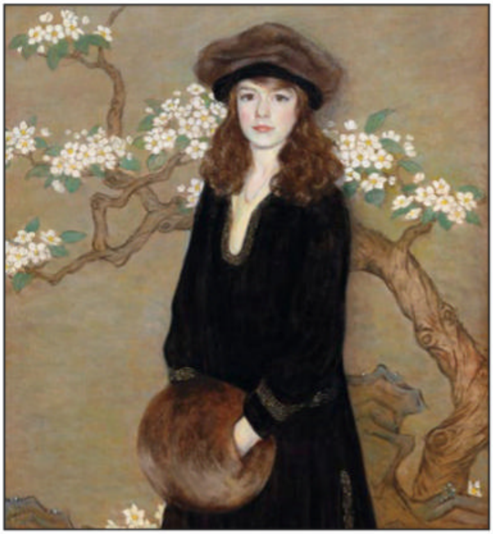

Charlotte, 1917 (detail)
Oil on canvas, 72 x 36 inches

THE
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Contact us: fedwinchurch1876@gmail.com

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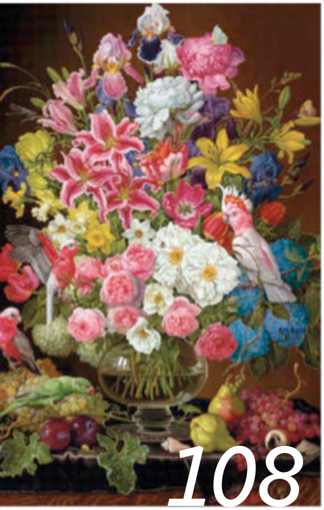

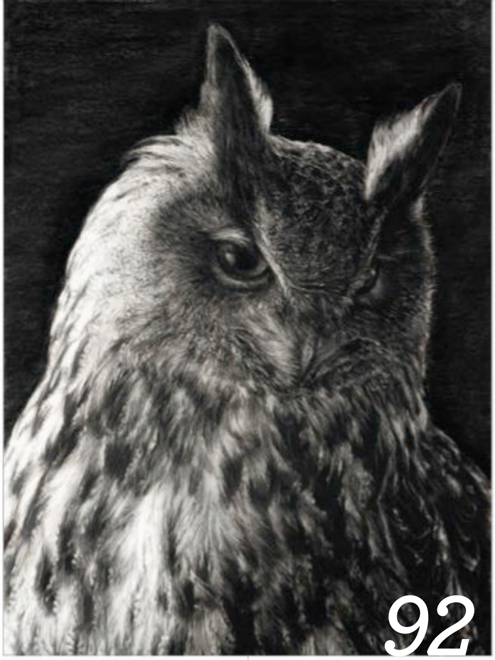

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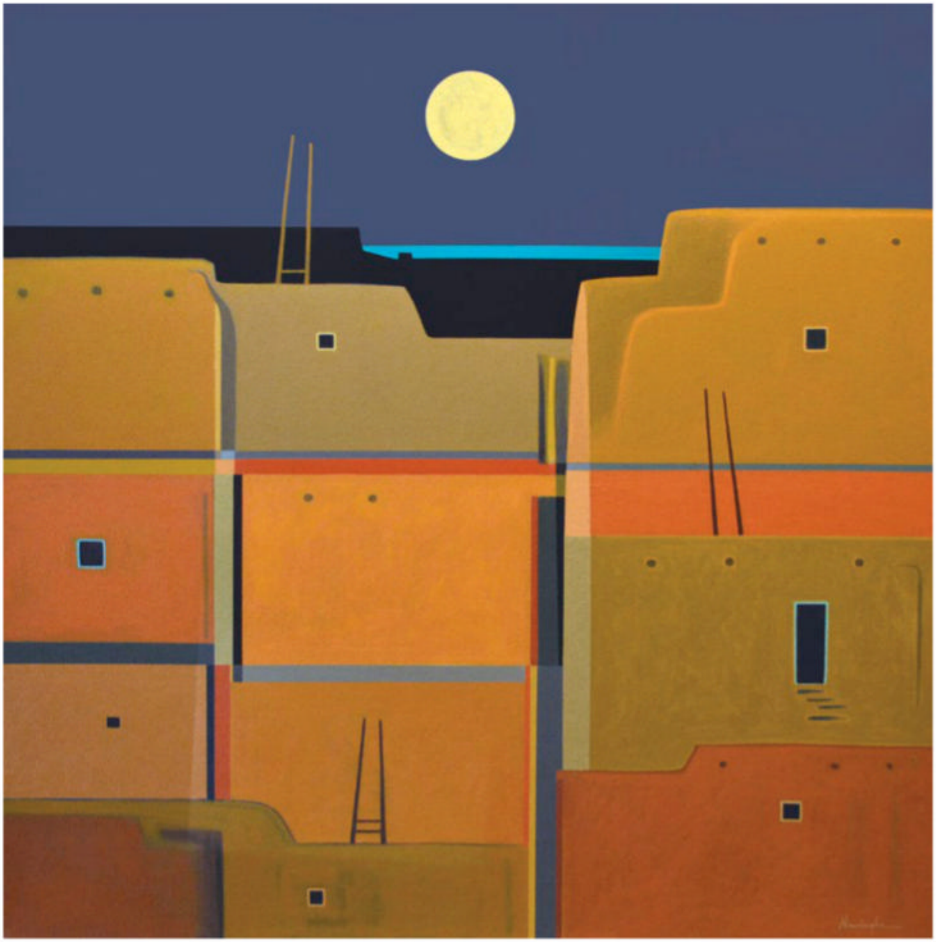

PUEBLO AND TWILIGHT MOON Acrylic on Canvas 40″ X 40″ Danl Namingha ©2025

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OUR GUIDE TO SPECIAL EVENTS, SALES &
AUCTIONS FROM COAST TO COAST

May 2025

April 23-June 14

Julie Beck, Larry Preston and Scott Prior

William Baczek Fine Arts

Northampton, MA • (413) 587-9880
www.wbfinearts.com

April 25-May 6

Nature & Emotion: Sculpting the Elements, Painting the Light

Blue Rain Gallery

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www.blueraingallery.com

April 30-May 30

Alan Bray: Inhabited Landscape

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www.garveysimon.com

May 1-June 2

Tyler Vouros: Night Calls

RJD Gallery

Romeo, MI • (586) 281-3613
www.rjdgallery.com

May 2-23

Mac Ball Solo Show

Meyer Vogl Gallery

Charleston, SC • (843) 805-7144
www.meyervogl.com

May 2-June 2

Kat Kinnick: Momento Vivere

Hecho A Mano

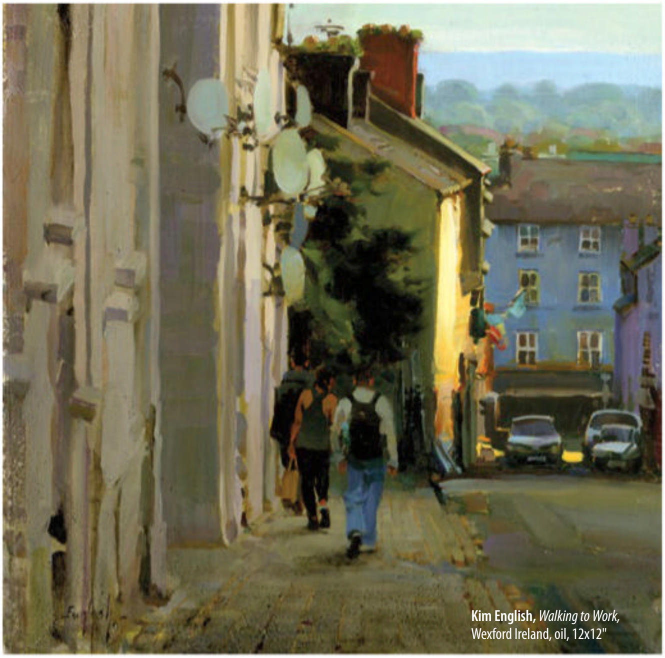
Santa Fe, NM • (505) 916-1341
www.hechoamano.org

May 3-June 14

Governor's Art Show & Sale

Loveland Museum

Loveland, CO • (970) 670-0035
www.governorsartshow.org



Kim English, *Walking to Work, Wexford Ireland*, oil, 12x12"

May 3-June 14 *Governor's Art Show & Sale*
Loveland Museum » Loveland, CO » (970) 670-0035 » www.governorsartshow.org

May 3-July 12

Allied Artists Professional League: Spring Members Online Show

Online

www.aaplinc.org

Through May 4

Ordinary People: Photorealism And the Work of Art Since 1968

Museum of Contemporary Art

Los Angeles, CA • (213) 621-2766
www.moca.org

May 4-June 21

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Wayne Art Center/Various Locations

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www.waynepleinair.org

May 8-11

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New York, NY
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SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Santa Fe Community Convention Center

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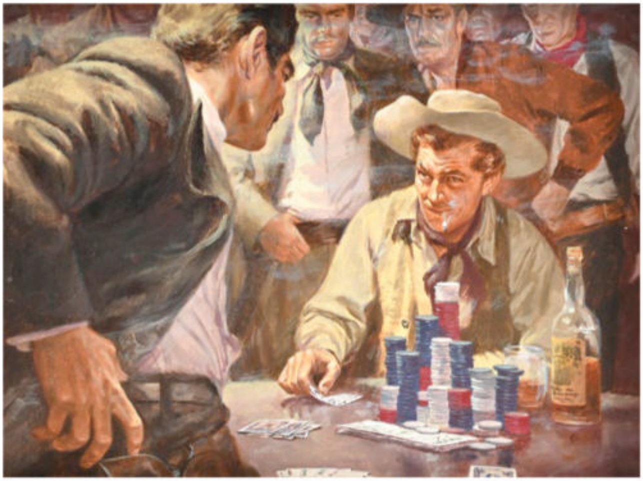

Robert Stanley (1932-1997)

Harry Jackson (1924-2011)

Show Hours:

Saturday, June 21st | 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM MDT
Sunday, June 22nd | 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM MDT

Auction Hours:

Saturday, June 21st | 5:00 PM MDT - Finish

MORPHY AUCTIONS

KEN MAYNARD

OLD WEST SHOW & AUCTION

OFFERING THE FINEST AUTHENTIC WESTERN ART, ARTIFACTS AND COLLECTIBLES AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC SALE.

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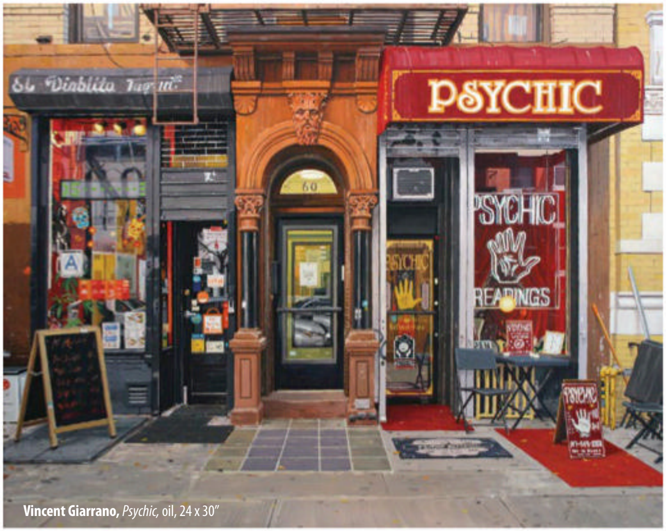
WWW.OLDWESTEVENTS.COM

art SHOW CALENDAR



Vincent Giarrano, *Psychic,* oil, 24 x 30"

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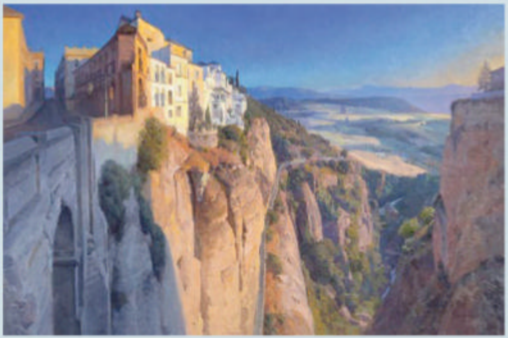
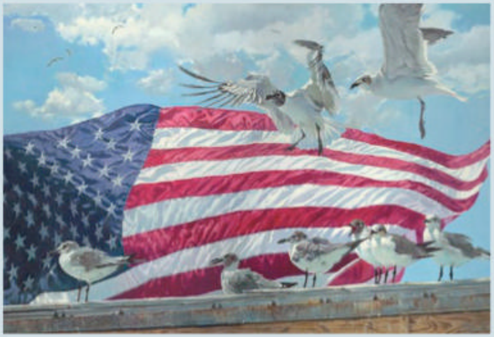
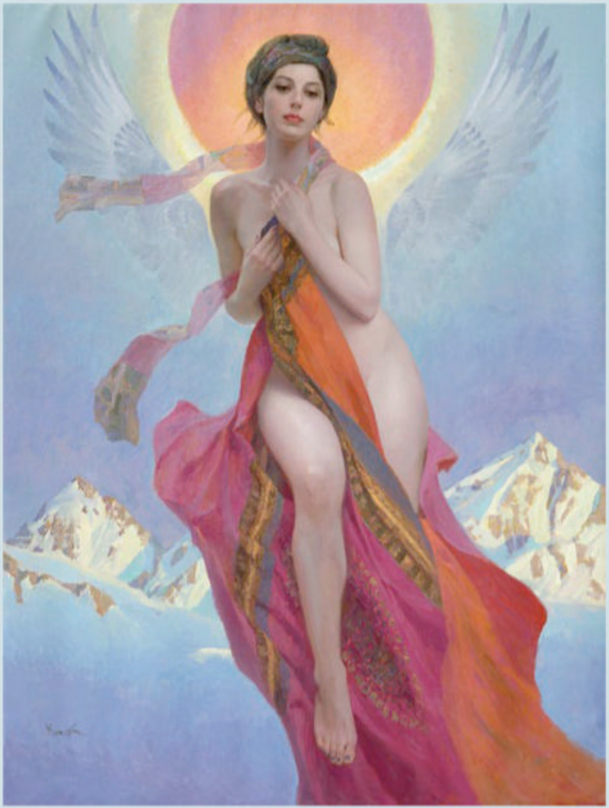


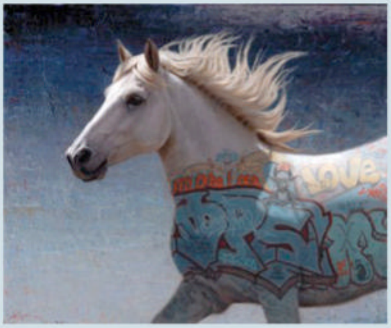
Mian Situ, *"Ronda Spain"*, oil, 40x60"



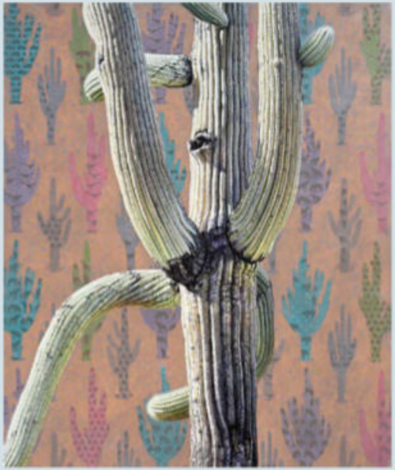
Matthew Hillier, *"Sea Breeze"*, oil, 40"x 72"



Mian Situ, *"Snowy Mountain"*, oil, 68 x 51"



Chauncey Homer, *"Graffiti Horse"*,oil, 40"x 48"



Andrew Denman, *"The Survivor"*, oil and acrylic, 72"x 48"

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New Orleans Museum of Art's 2025 cohort

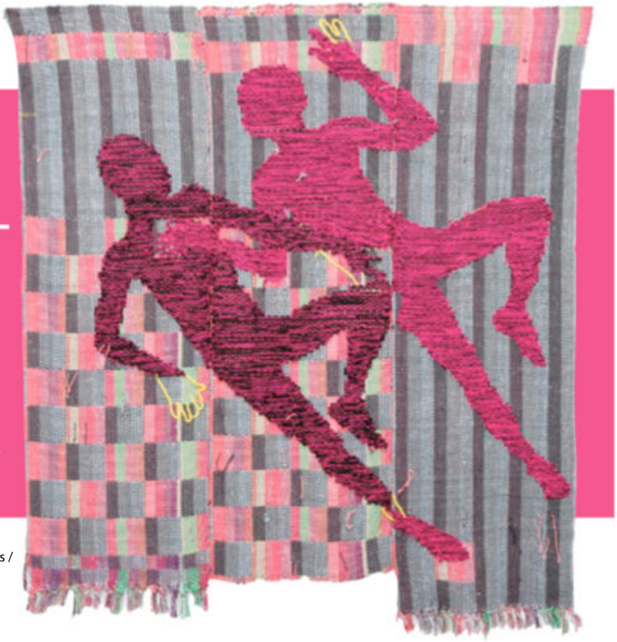
This year's cohort of Creative Assembly residents at the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) includes eight artists from various disciplines. Launched in 2021, NOMA's Creative Assembly residency promotes community engagement by welcoming artists to collaborate throughout the year with the museum's permanent collection, special exhibitions and programs. Members of the 2024-25 Creative Assembly Cohort are Andy Young, Caleb Dowden, Carl Harrison Jr., Cassie Watson Francillon, Horton Humble, Jer'Lisa Devezin, LaVonna Varnado-Brown and Nikkisha K. Napoleon.

Top (left to right): Jer'Lisa Devezin, Caleb Dowden, Cassie Watson Francillon, Carl Harrison Jr.

Bottom (left to right): Horton Humble, Nikkisha K. Napoleon, LaVonna Varnado-Brown, Andy Young.

Contemporary Tapestry

Dallas, Texas-based art space Dallas Contemporary presents the exhibition *You Stretched Diagonally Across It: Contemporary Tapestry*, featuring artists El Anatsui, Candice Lin, Diedrick Brackens, Sanam Khatabi and more. Curated by Mexico-based curator Su Wu, *You Stretched Diagonally Across It* offers a consideration of tactility and image in 21st-century tapestries, and the strategies by which artists interrogate haptic sense, material tension and narrative in weaving. The exhibition will be on view through October 12.



Diedrick Brackens, *nuclear lovers,* 2020, woven cotton and acrylic yarn, 78 x 72". Courtesy the artist and Various Small Fires, Los Angeles / Dallas / Seoul. The Mohn Family Trust, a promised gift to MAC3.

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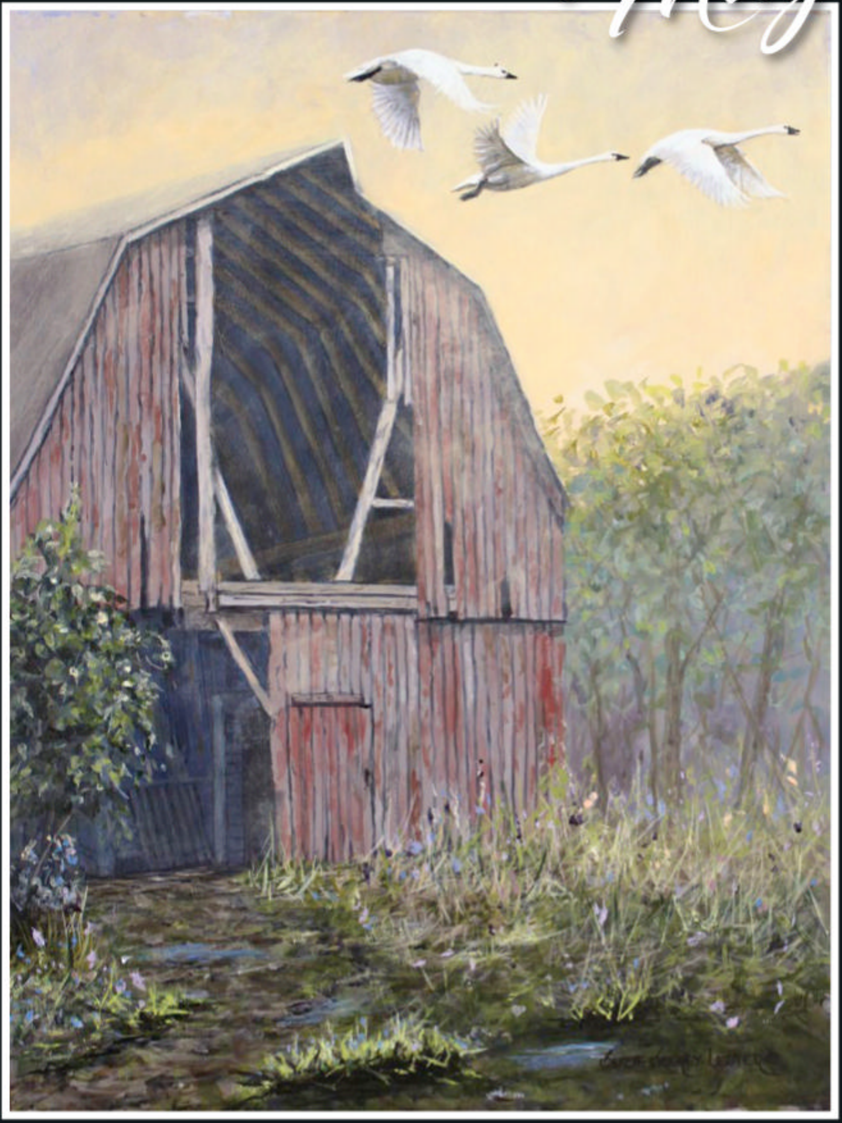

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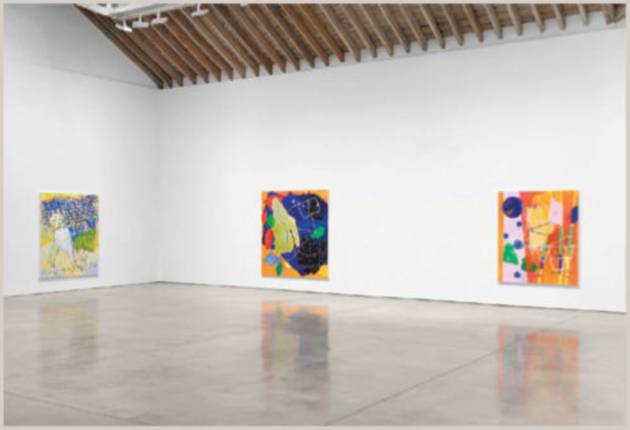
The latest in contemporary American realism.

Cynthia Hawkins solo show



An installation view of *Maps Necessary for a Walk in 4D*. © Cynthia Hawkins. Courtesy the artist, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, and STARS, Los Angeles. Photo by: Steven Probert.

New York-based painter and sculptor Cynthia Hawkins explores diverse literary, philosophical, and scientific influences through her richly colorful artwork. An exhibition currently on view at Paula Cooper Gallery in SoHo, Manhattan, showcases new works from Hawkins' ongoing series *Maps Necessary for a Walk in 4D*. "In these works, the form of specific maps direct investigations into color and light, providing both an underlying compositional structure and a symbolic vocabulary that plays out on the surface. By manipulating the same maps within each work and across the series, Hawkins provides a consistent point of entry that guides the viewer to engage in extended looking," the gallery notes. *Maps Necessary for a Walk in 4D* will be on view through May 3.

Canyon Road Spring Art Festival

Dozens of artists working in every medium imaginable will show off their creative processes during the ninth annual *Canyon Road Spring Art Festival* in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Galleries will present a wide variety of original works in oil, acrylic, watercolors, pastels, charcoal, pen and ink and graphite. Also on view are three-dimensional mixed media works, collages, photography, bronze and metal sculpture, wood working, ceramics, pottery, glass fusion and glass art, hand-crafted art jewelry, leather works and more. The event takes place on historic Canyon Road, Saturday May 10, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

CANYON ROAD

Canyon Road in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Courtesy Tourism Santa Fe.

MoMA's search for new director ends

The Museum of Modern Art in New York has officially appointed its newest director, after an intensive six-month international search. Christophe Cherix will assume the role of David Rockefeller Director in September, succeeding Glenn D. Lowry. Cherix originally joined the MoMA's curatorial staff in 2007, and has served as the Robert Lehman Foundation Chief Curator of Drawings and Prints since 2013. Prior to MoMA, Cherix served as curator of the Cabinet des Estampes at the Musée d'art et d'histoire in Geneva, Switzerland. At MoMA, Cherix's exhibitions have included ED RUSCHA / NOW THEN (2024), Betye Saar: Legends of Black Girl's Window (with Esther Adler, 2019), Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Institutions, 1965-2016 (with Connie Butler and David Platzker, 2018), and many more.

Christopher Cherix

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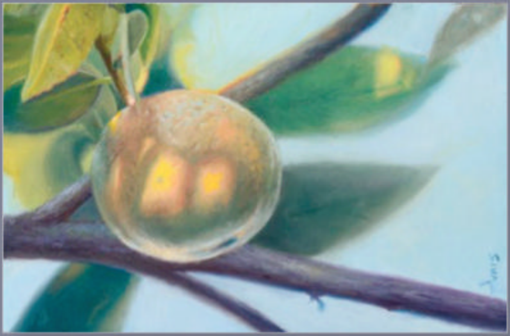
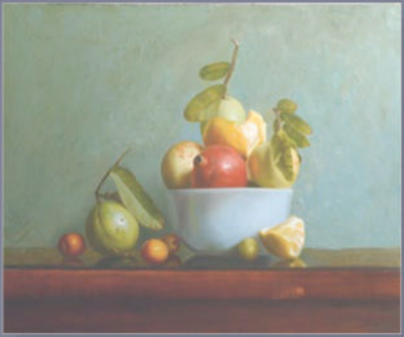
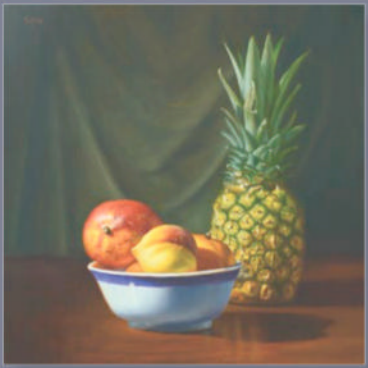


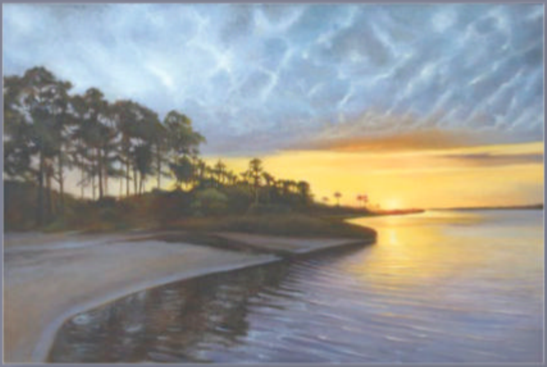
Orange in Shadows, oil on panel, 6” x 9”



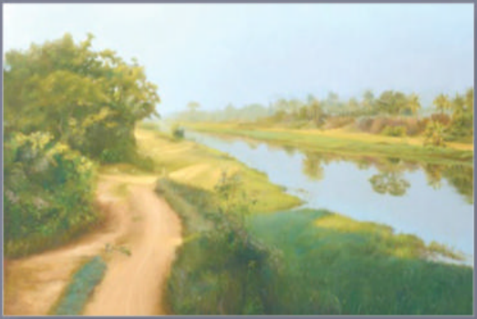
Fruit Bowl, oil on linen, 20” x 24”



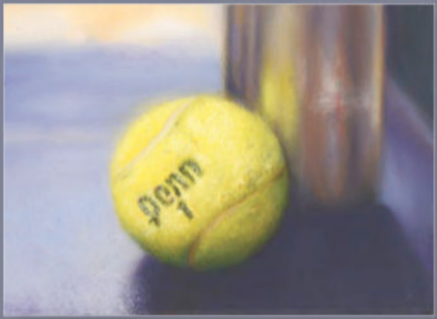
Mangoes, Peach, Pineapple, oil on linen, 20” x 20”



Cloudy Morning, oil on linen, 40” x 60”



Clear Morning, oil on linen, 40” x 60”



Tennis Ball, oil on panel, 5” x 7”

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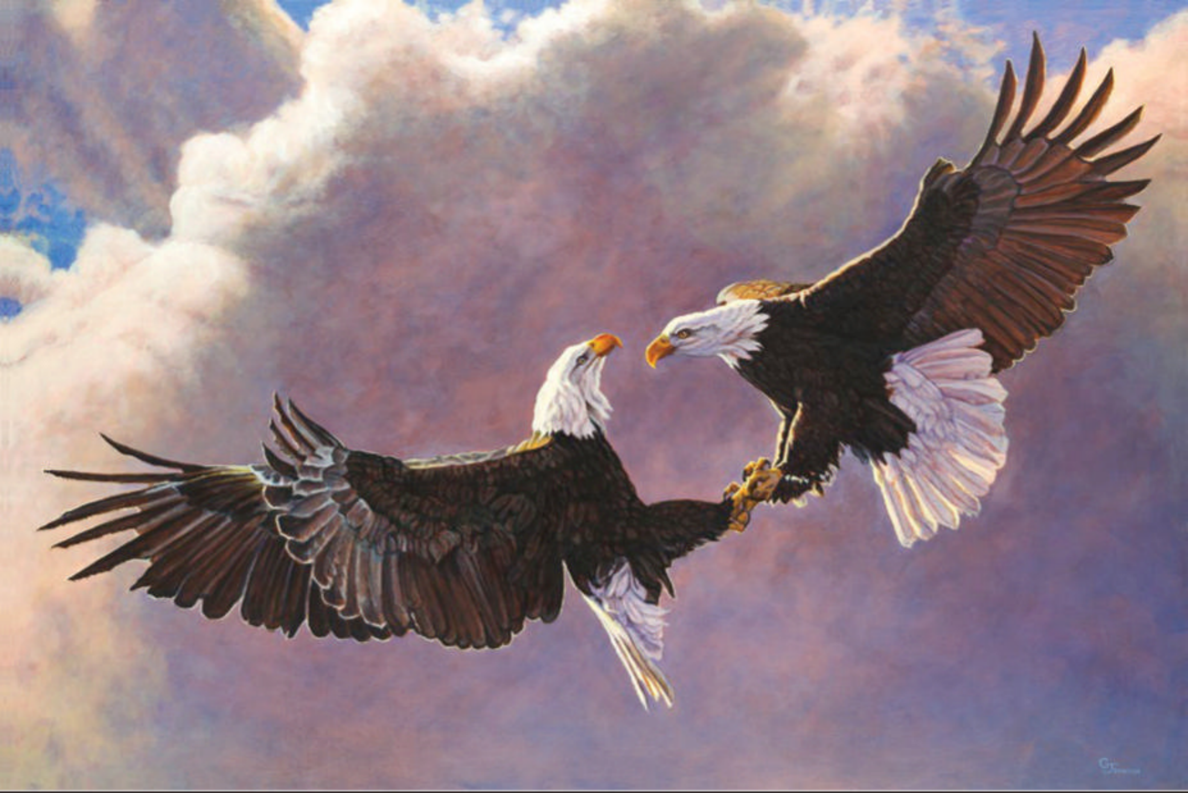

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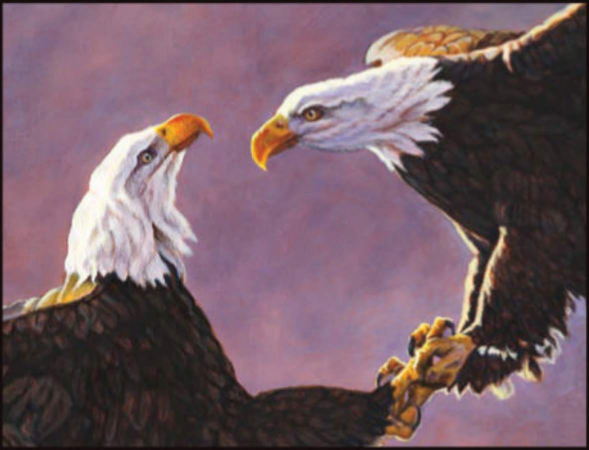

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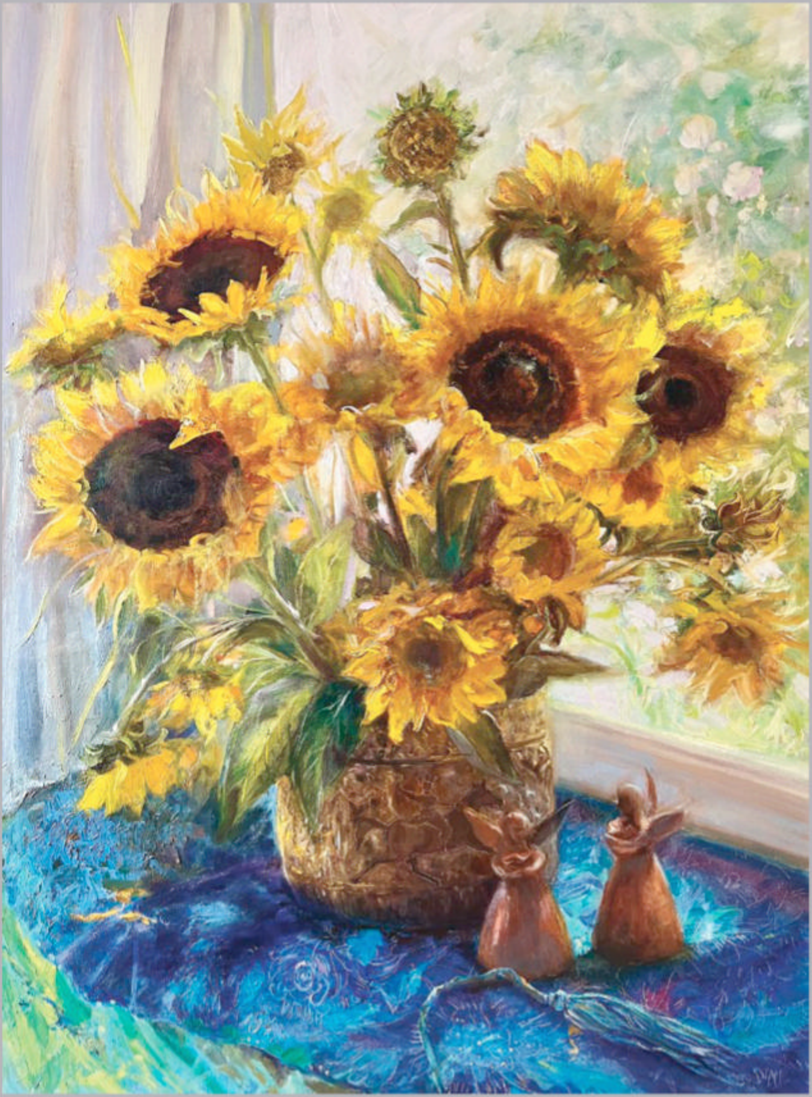

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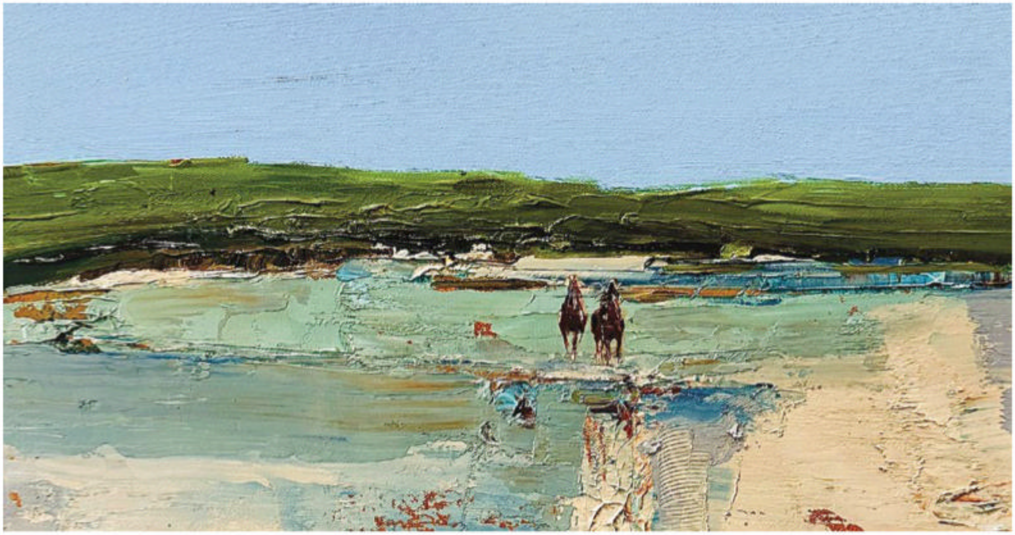
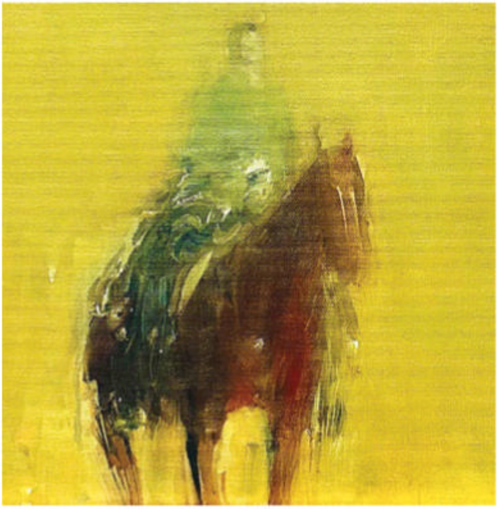
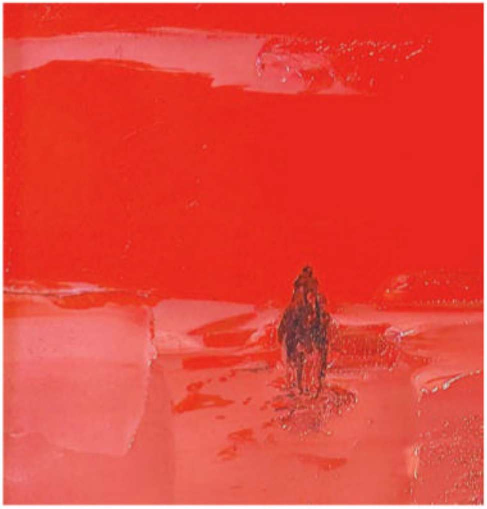


The Horse in the Landscape Series Oil on Canvas, 10 x 20", Private Collection



Horse and Rider Oil on Canvas, 10 x 20", Detail



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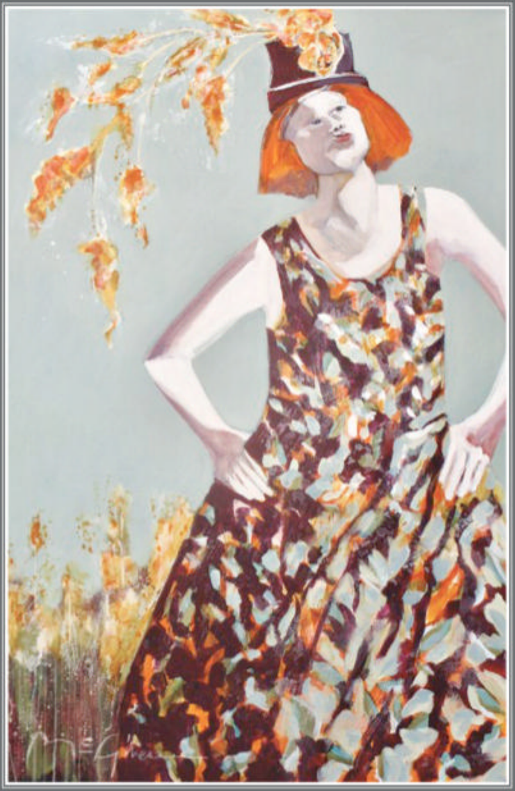
Peggy McGivern



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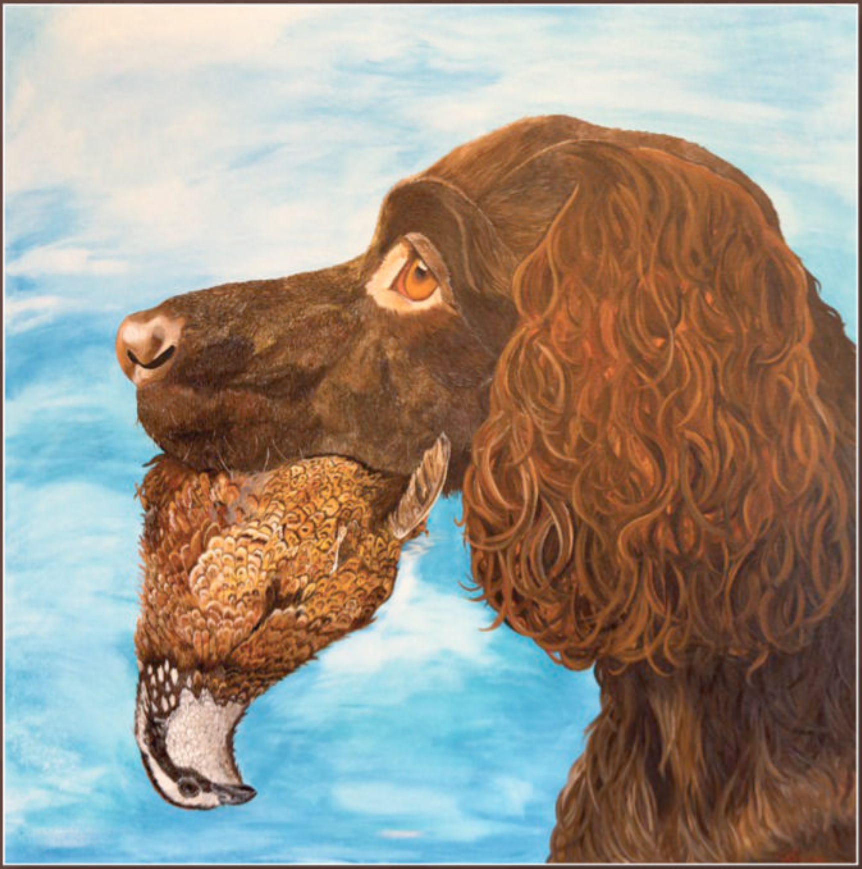

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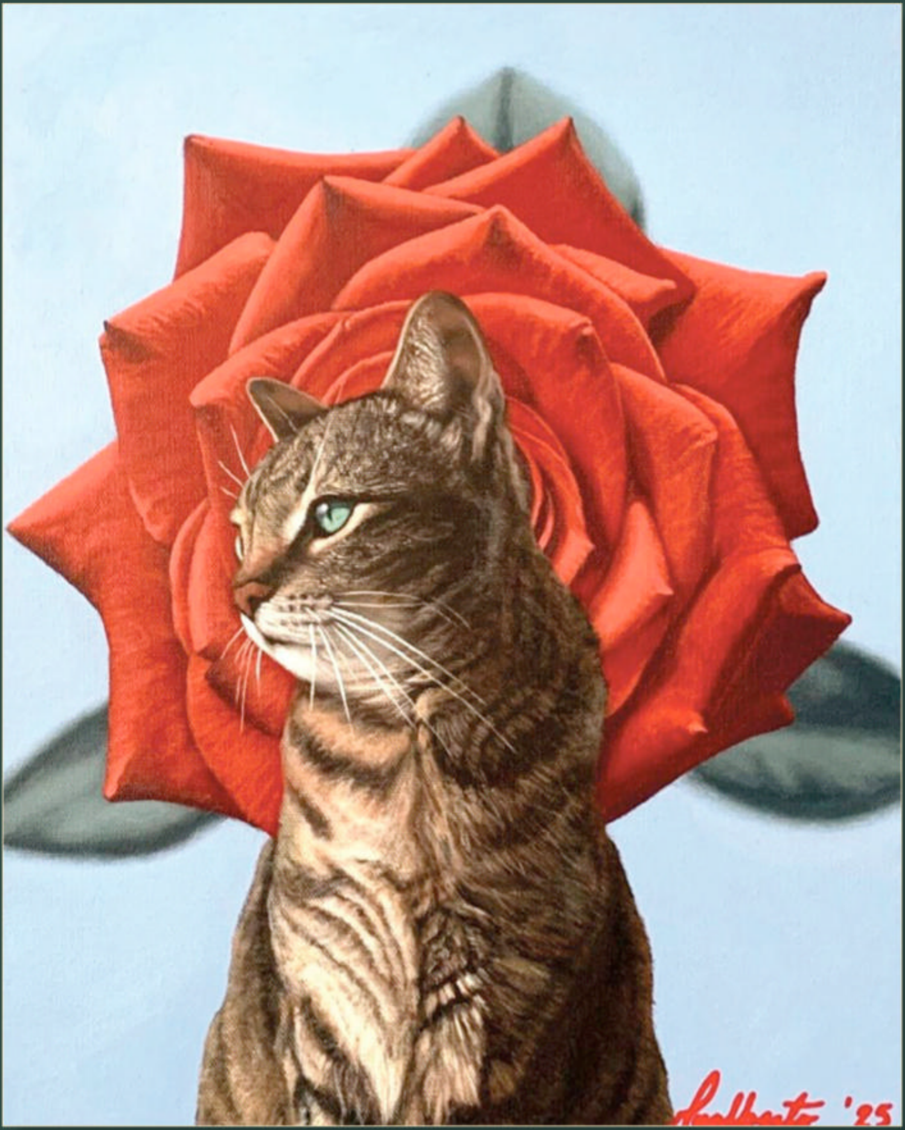

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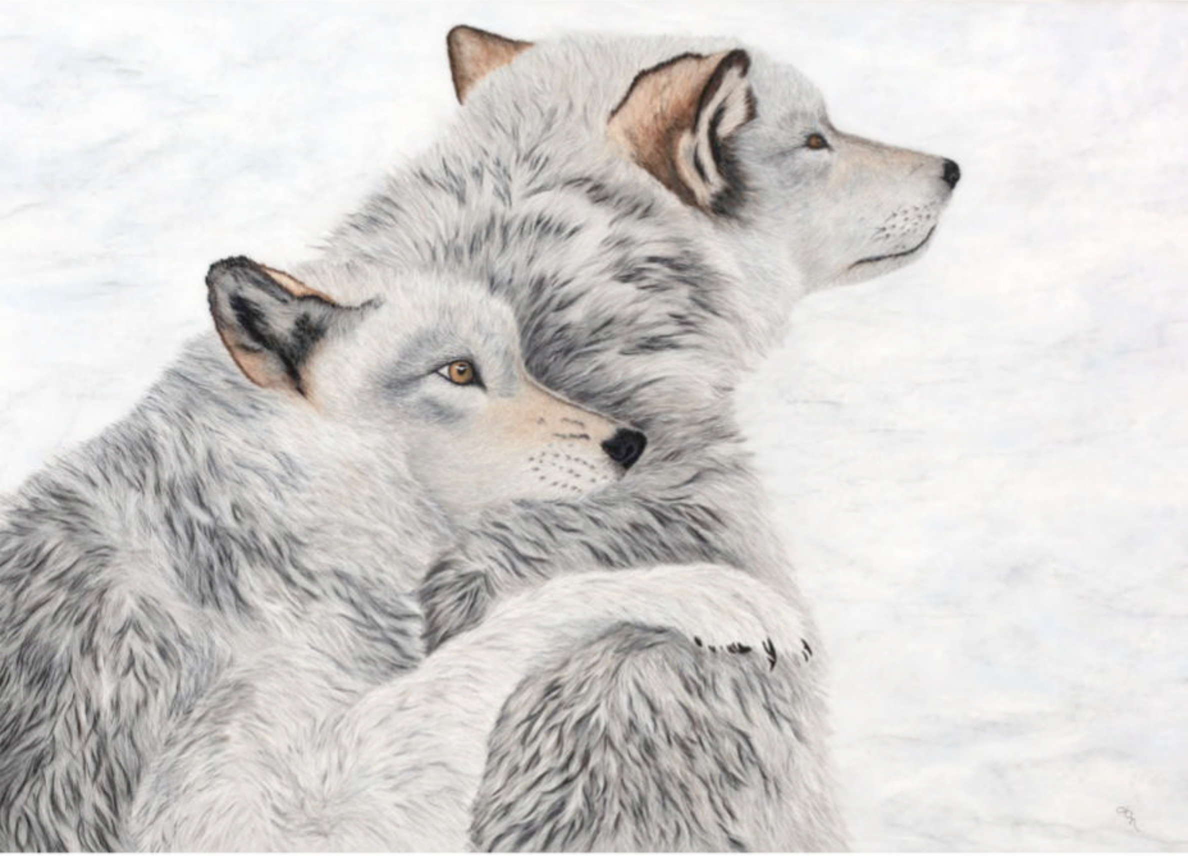

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Freedom of Expression

After stepping away from Western art, California painter Mian Situ turns to the figure. And soars higher than ever.

BY MICHAEL CLAWSON

In the world of Western art—"Western" as in cowboys and Old West subjects, not Western Hemisphere—there are a handful of painters that are widely considered masters of the genre. They range from former illustrators who turned to fine art, to Western purists in cowboy hats and boots, to classically trained figurative painters with books by Sorolla and Zorn next to bison skulls and Navajo blankets in their studio. In a category (nearly) by himself is Mian Situ, a Chinese American painter from Southern California who brought unique and historical perspectives into the genre. Situ was on top of the Western art world as one of its most acclaimed and distinguished stars. And then he walked away from it all.

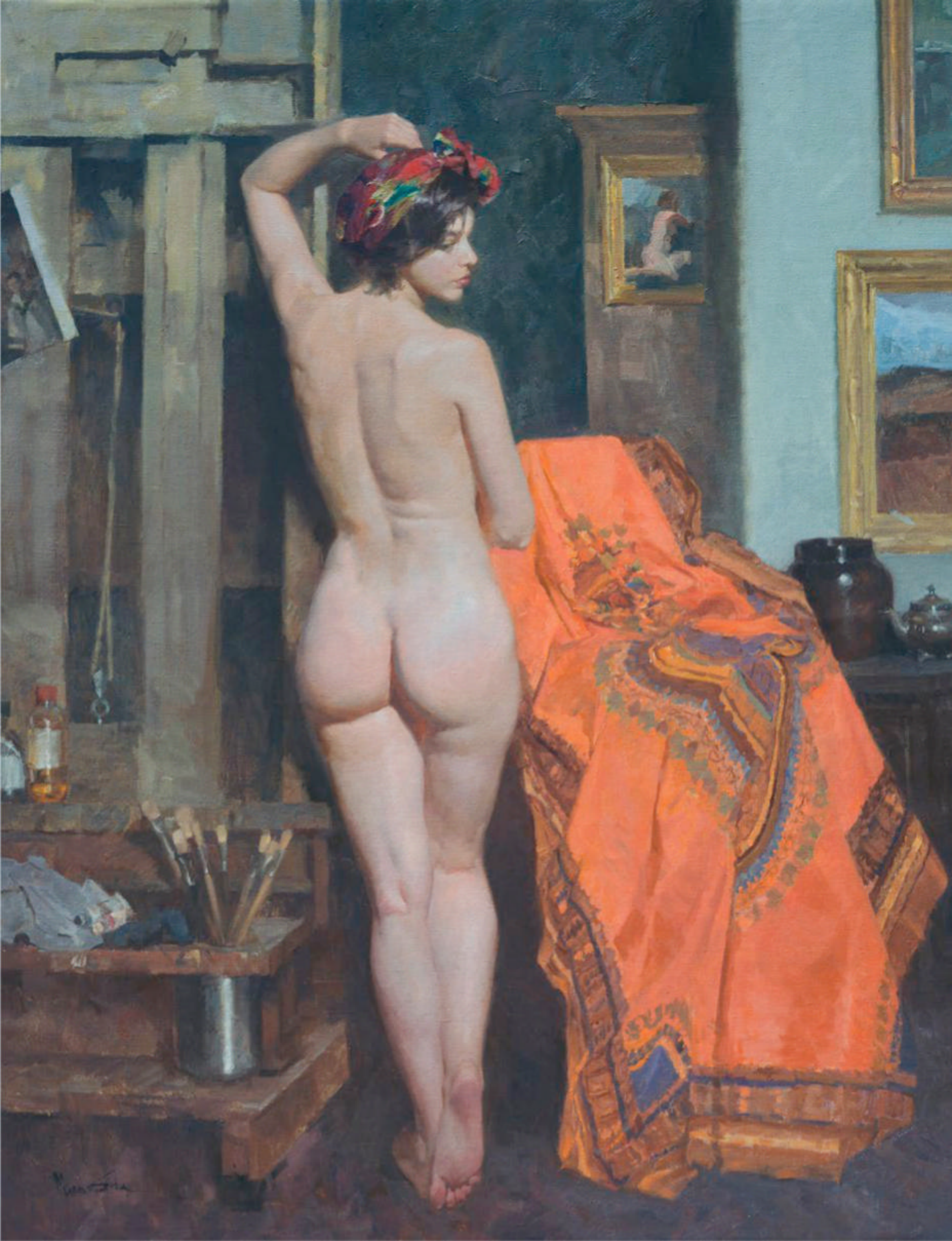
But that's not the end of the story—just the beginning of a new and very different chapter.

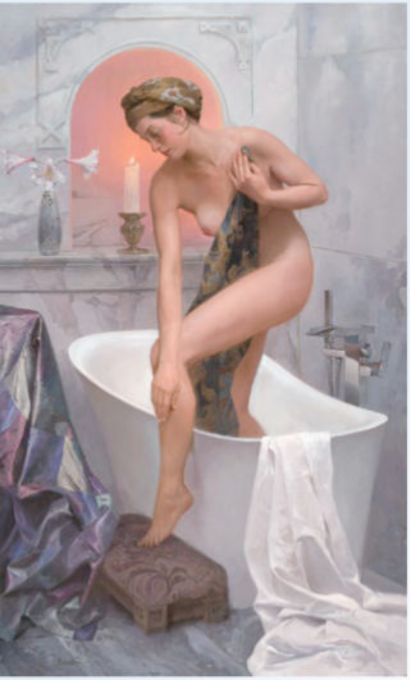
Situ, untethered from his historical subjects, has turned his attention to gorgeously painted figures in magical and surreal settings, works that have been linked spiritually to the Renaissance and the Pre-Raphaelites of the mid-19th century. The 18 pieces, almost all created within the last two years, have largely been unseen by the public simply because they've been purchased as soon as the final brushstrokes were laid down. For Situ, the success of the paintings proves that artists should never feel stuck in one genre.

"I have always liked to paint very different things. I wish I had more time to do all I want to do. There was an old way of training artists: young apprentices followed a master painter in his studio to learn how he painted particular things. But the way I was trained was different and I like it. As a student I was taught the

Above
Mian Situ in his studio with *Night*, left, and *Peacock Skirt*.

Opposite
Shadia in the Studio, oil, 46 x 36"





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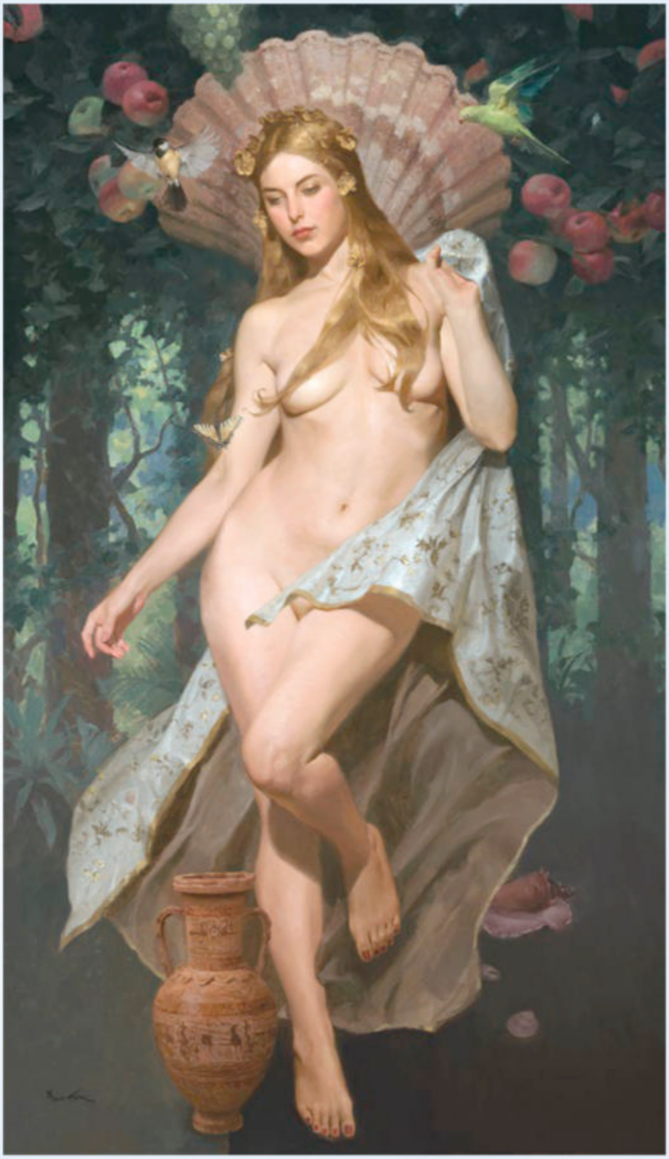

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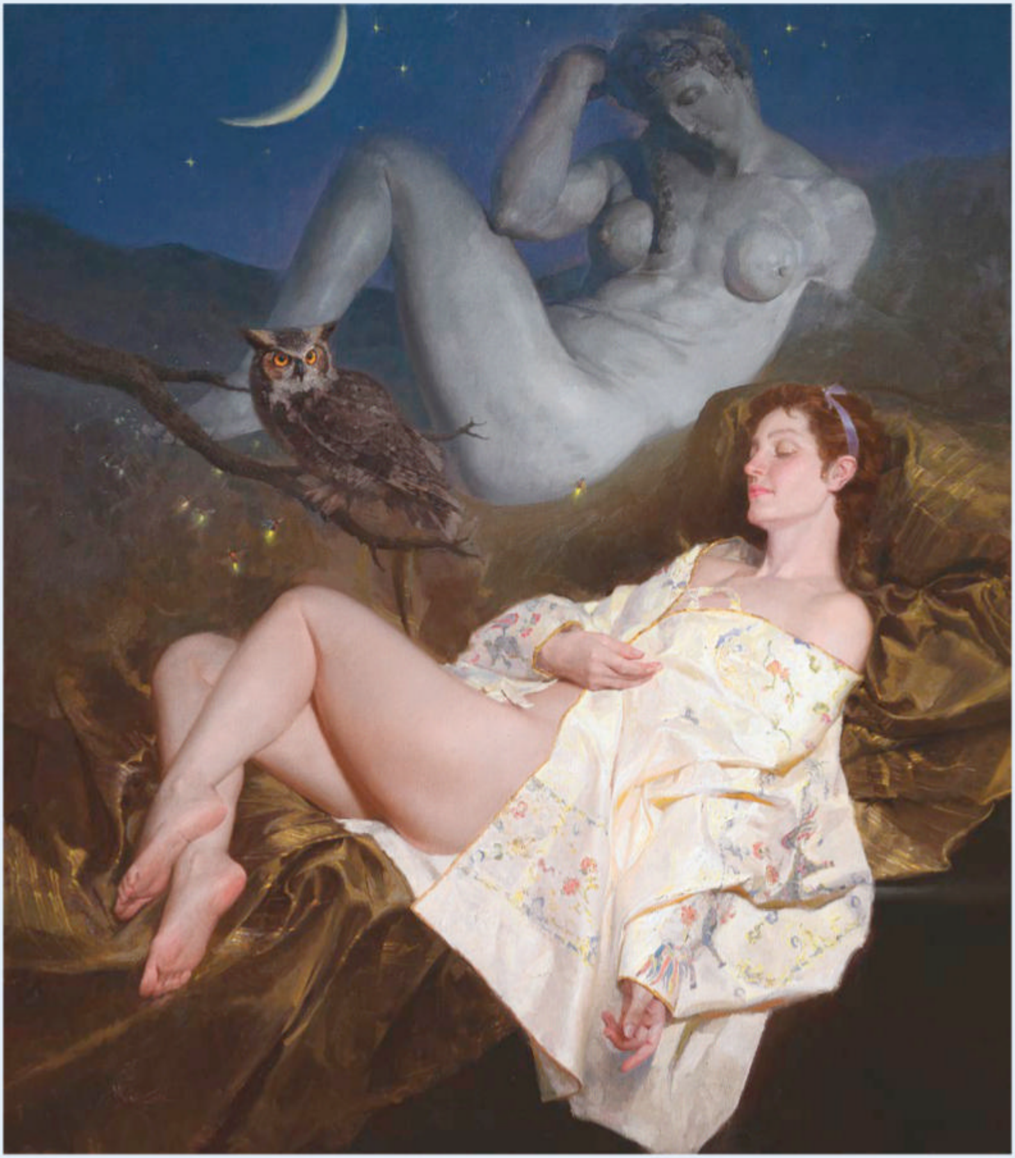
principles of art, including the way to think and the way to observe. Our teachers didn't require you to follow certain styles. Styles are your own choice," Situ says from his studio. "Once you are armed with the broad knowledge base you can develop your own style and choose you own direction. I believe that only when an artist follows his heart, he can be a good artist."

These redefining motivations in his studio shouldn't be a surprise for those who know Situ's life and career. He was born in South China and studied art in the rural countryside of Guangdong. Although China's Cultural Revolution was in full force, the young artist was exposed to European and Renaissance art, which was forbidden by the Communist Party. After the 1976 death of Mao Zedong, the architect of the Cultural Revolution, travel opened up within China and young people flocked to see the outside world. Situ acquired a student visa and headed to the United States. He landed in Los Angeles in 1987 as an eager and hungry artist.

His artwork at that time was a mixture of his old home and his new, with many paintings showing the experiences of Chinese immigrants as they interacted with American people, places and customs in settings like Gold Rush-era San Francisco, on railway lines cutting through the Sierra Nevadas and in the Canyonlands of Utah. Although not overtly Western—there were no bucking horses or longhorn cattle—his paintings spoke to an outsider's cultural curiosity within the vastness and beauty of the Old West. His paintings also placed Asians in historically accurate settings that acknowledged their contributions in the creation of the American West.

And he was successful. Wildly so. Starting in 1995, Situ won awards at nearly every show he participated in, from the Oil Painters of America to plein air groups to the *Masters of the American West* at the Autry Museum of the American West. He has enough gold medals in his studio to pave a winding path from his front door to



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his street. His auction record stands at $431,000, and he has pieces in major public and private collections around the country. As a testament to his skill and talent, he even has works in the collection of Howard Terpning, widely acknowledged as the greatest living Western painter.

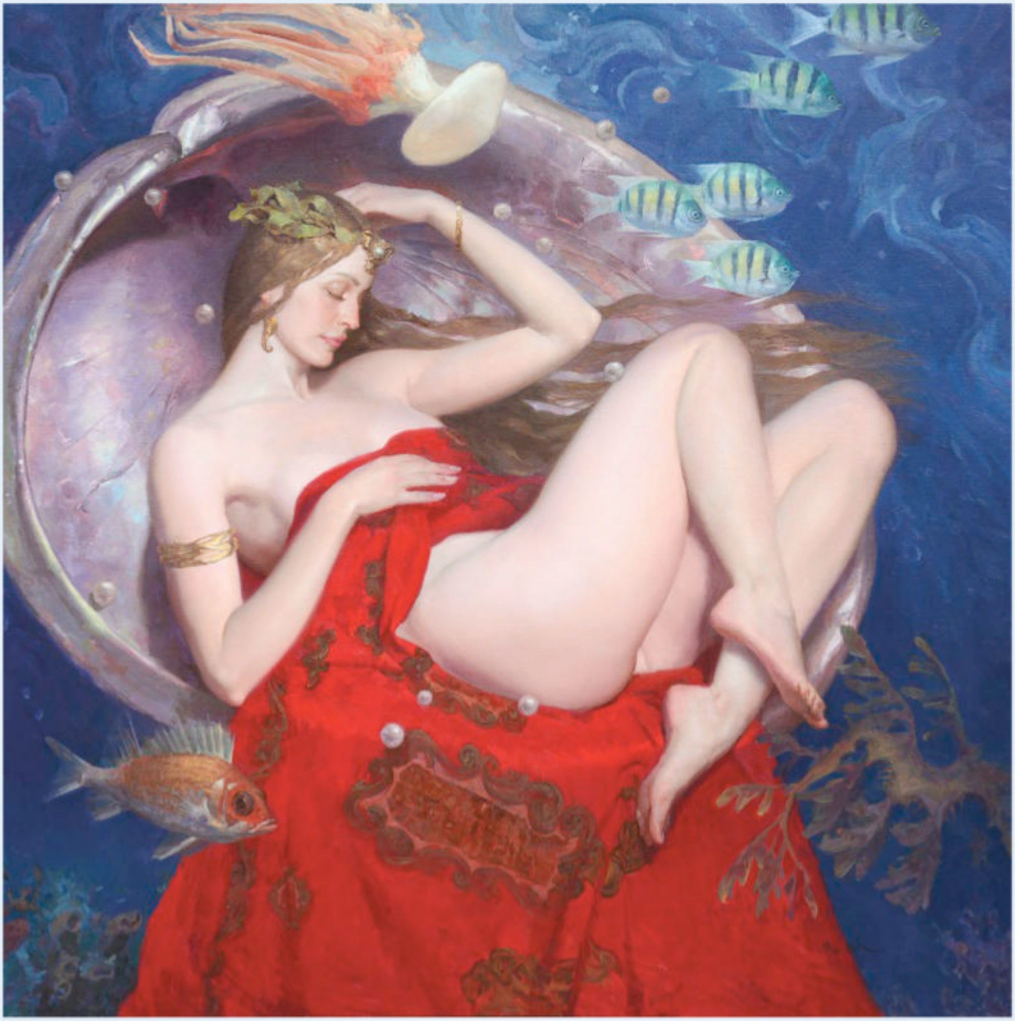
All of this makes his pivot away from Western art fascinating, albeit a bit complicated for his Western galleries.

Chris Sanders, owner of Sanders Galleries in Tucson, Arizona, first met Situ in the early 2000s and only started representing the artist recently. In 2023, Sanders saw some of his work at another gallery and, while the paintings were flawlessly executed, something was off about the pieces. "They felt uninspired. It didn't seem right for an artist of Mian's caliber. I had been in the art world professionally for 26 years, which is long enough to realize that

1
Candlelight, oil, 72 x 44"

2
With Nature, oil, 72 x 42"

3
Night, oil, 62 x 54"



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an artist like Mian might have felt stuck," Sanders says. "I wondered if he wanted to do something else. So I looked into it."

Sanders, who was traveling at the time, went back to his hotel and immediately visited Situ's website. It was there, behind a link labeled "Other," where he found *Shadia in the Studio*. It was a profound discovery. "It's a figurative piece, 46 by 36 inches, and it was the most brilliant figurative painting I've seen by any living artist," Sanders says. "The figure is the hardest subject to paint. Artists who do it well, either they make it look like a photograph or they do it in the style of [John Singer] Sargent or [Anders] Zorn. It was academically excellent, but it was also just stunning. Here was this piece I was seeing on the website and I was comparing it to what I had just seen at his gallery. The difference was incredible."

He drafted an email to the artist asking about *Shadia in the Studio* and complimenting its execution. "I sent the email and within almost 30 seconds an email came back, and I could sense his demeanor was inquisitive and he wanted to know why I was asking," Sanders adds. "I told him the piece was magnificent and I asked if I could sell it for him. He told me, 'Chris, you surprise me because this is the kind of painting I want to do most."

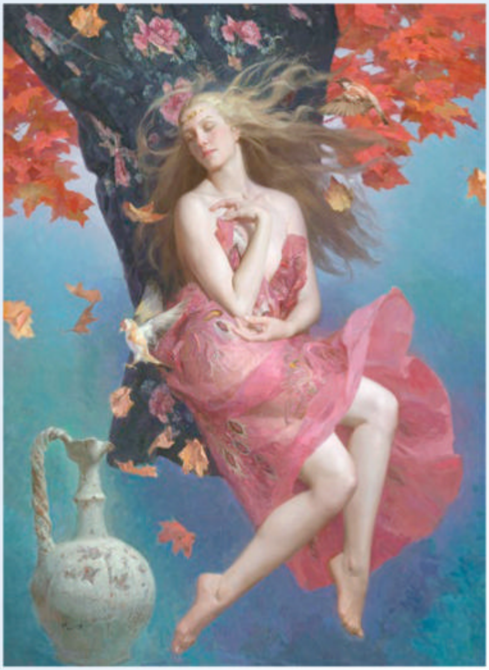
It wasn't long after that the two men were greeting each other in person at Situ's California studio. They talked about John Everett Millais, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, John William Waterhouse, Sargent,

4
Oceana, oil, 56 x 56"

5
Autumn Breeze, oil, 66 x 48"

6
Iris Blossom, oil, 64 x 48"

7
Evening Elegance, oil, 48 x 56"



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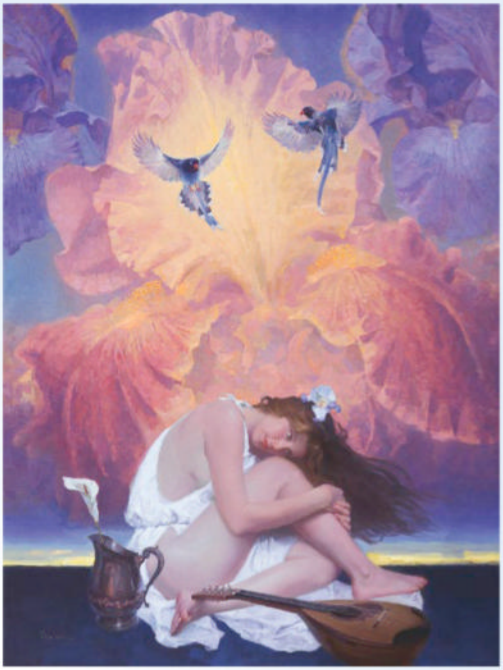

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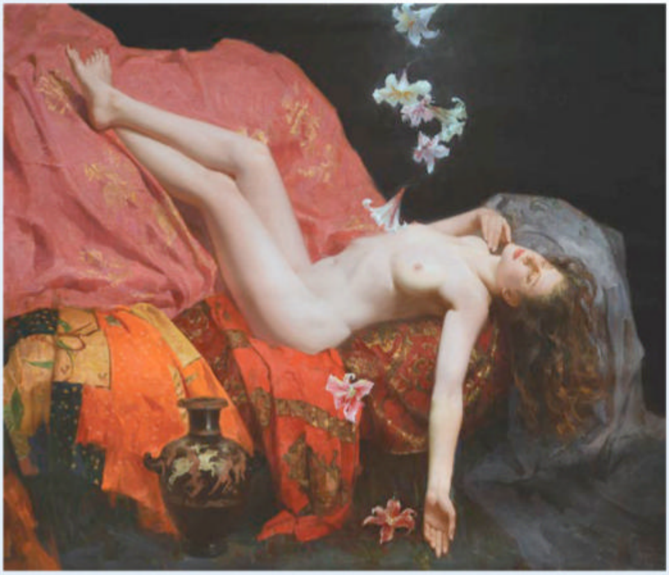

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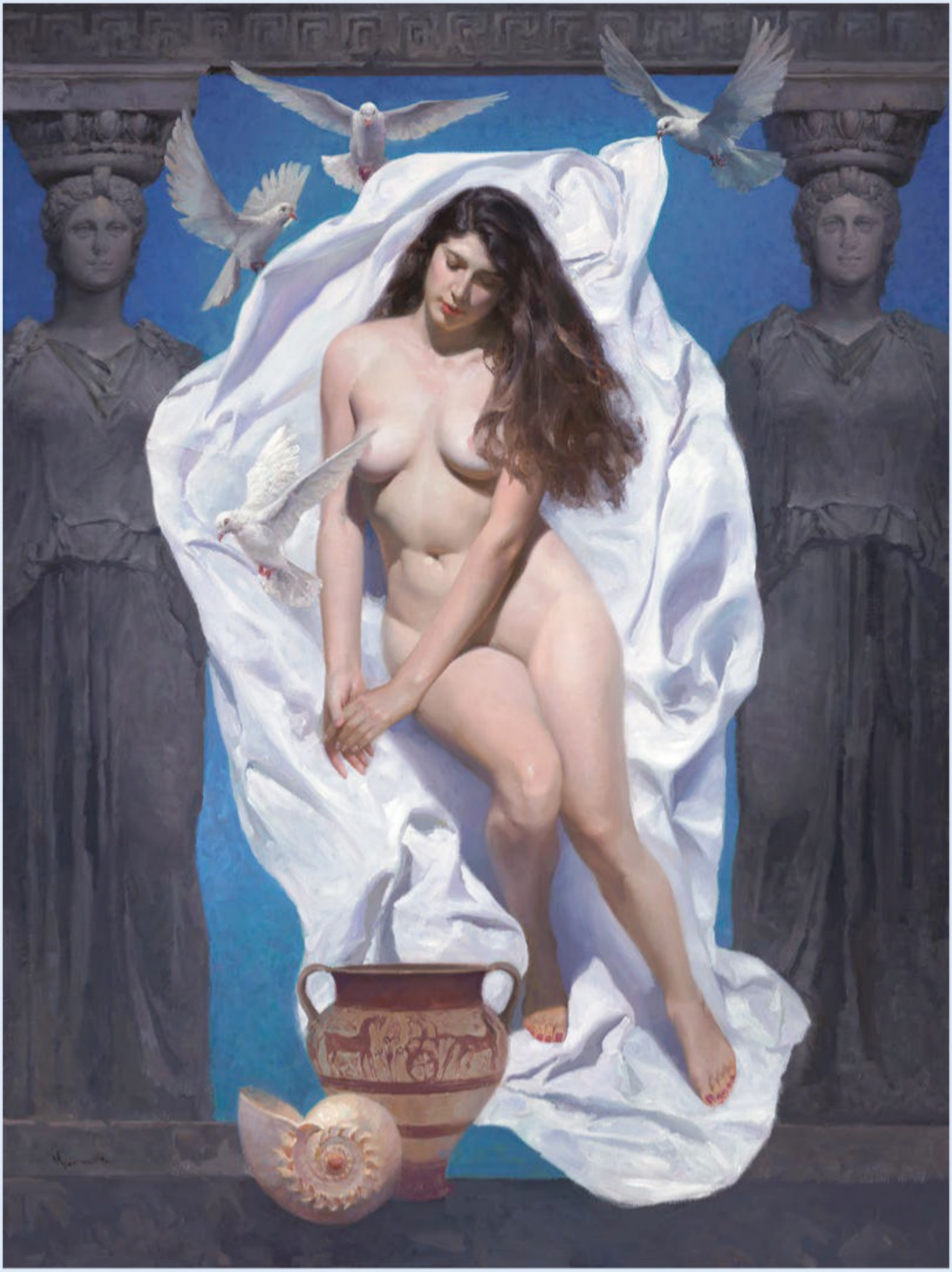
Zorn and Situ's older works. It was a vibe check, and they both felt comfortable with each other, so Sanders left with two paintings to begin showing collectors. Before leaving town to return to Arizona, Sanders went to lunch and texted one of his top clients, a collector who largely only collects work from deceased painters. The collector immediately bought one without even knowing the price. Sanders, still in Southern California, felt obligated to return to Situ's studio to deliver the good news in person. "He opened the door and asked if I forgot something. I told him I sold the painting, and he looked down at the floor, sort of upset. I asked if I did something wrong. 'Chris, I wanted to keep that one. I'm very happy, but please don't sell the other one,'" says Sanders, who clocked that Situ hadn't even processed that his new style could be sold so quickly. The other work, *Shadia in the Studio*, is still part of Situ's personal collection.

In 2023 and 2024, the artist and gallery owner were off to the races. Situ painted large and magnificent paintings of figures, and Sanders sold them as quickly as they were finished. The pieces went to top collectors, including to movers and shakers in important art circles on the East Coast. In a little more than a year, they sold more than $1.5 million in art.

Situ notes that his studio felt more alive than ever. "I think the human body is the most beautiful creature in the world. The structure, the color and the flexibility of it is amazing. It is a timeless subject for art. The pursuit of its beauty is endless. I use models for my paintings. The most ideal way to paint a human body is to paint from life. But there is a limit—some great movements or beautiful gestures cannot be



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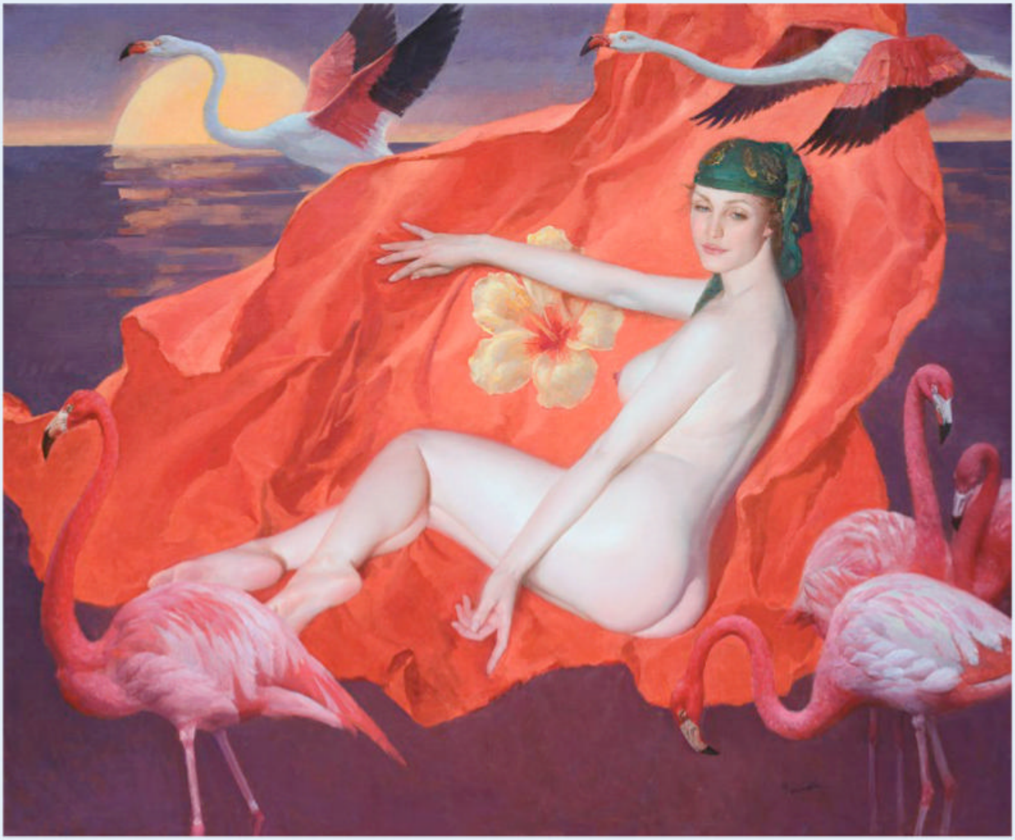

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achieved by a long still pose. A camera is very helpful nowadays," he says. "My approach is more spontaneous even when I am working on a large canvas, which takes a month to finish. I have a vision about what I am going to paint before I work on the canvas. But once the process of the painting starts, I feel like what is already on the canvas will lead me where to go from there. The painting might end up different from what I plan. I think that is exactly the fun of painting. Life is fun because we never know what is going to be next."

He doesn't rule out a future return to the Western genre, but Situ is also fully committed to this new trajectory within his studio. "I have been painting the genre of Western subjects for years. Artists need inspiration for new works and after you have to produce many works for a similar theme, your imagination feels somewhat run out. That is what happened to me while painting the old subjects. I felt that I was repeating the same things, and my desire and impulse to paint became weaker. I felt I needed some change," he says. "Genre paintings always come with stories that happen in the present day or in history. They are challenging. A lot of time is needed in research and how to have the stories told uniquely. There is some limit to the freedom of expression of an artist. There are different kinds of art besides the genre painting. I like to refer it as 'art for the sake of art itself.' Artists always like to have more freedom in their creations...I think it is about time I should try something different now before it is too late for me. So I began to try to paint some new paintings for myself even if there is no market for it...It proves that when the artist puts their soul and effort into their work there will be people who feel the enthusiasm of the creator."

There are also broader implications here for other artists: Situ proves that an artist should not feel bound to one identity. They and their work can, and probably should, change.

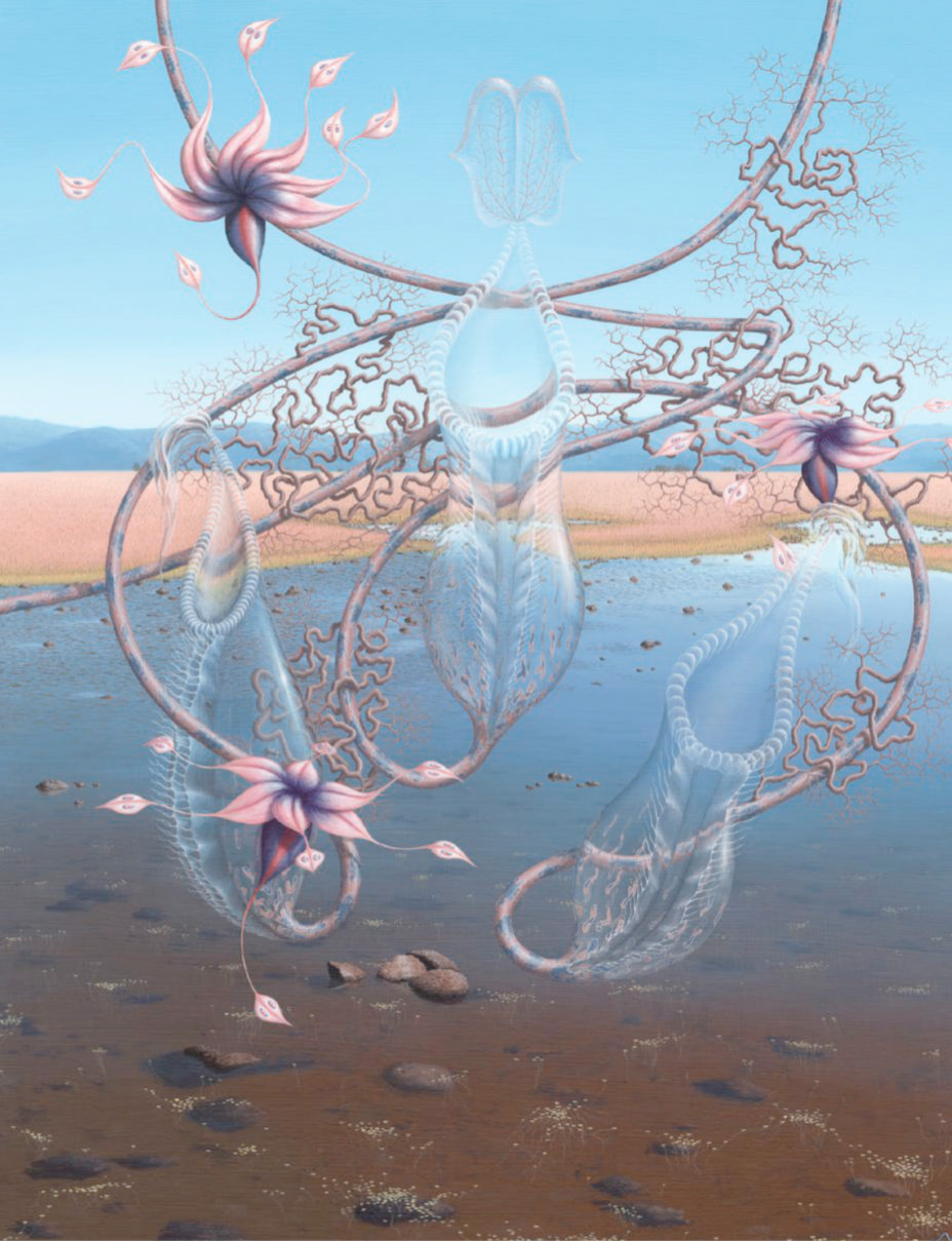
"Paint what makes you happy," Situ adds. ●

SANDERS GALLERIES

Tucson, AZ, www.sandersgalleries.com

8
Timeless Beauty, oil, 60 x 45"

9
Evening Breeze, oil, 58 x 70"



behind the VEIL

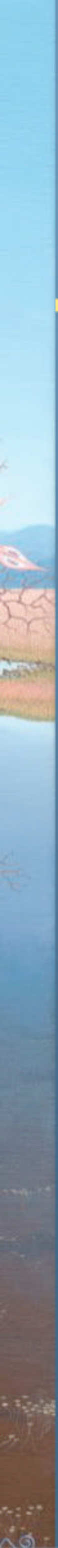
Micah Ofstedahl reaches beyond the surface to reveal the numinous nature of the natural world.

BY MICHAEL PEARCE

The soul of nature is present in the forest depths of Southern Oregon's mountains and valleys, like a breathing being emerging from the stillness of the land. An overflowing and embracing essence that radiates life, like incense mingling with the scent and resinous weight of ponderosa pines in the breeze, and winding through the madrone groves that cut the forest with straight edges of bright bark in red oxide, and the glossy greens of their leaves. Black squirrels skitter and snatch nuts, blue streaks of stellar jays scream alarm, and gold-eyed deer stare in ruminant calm. Tall and slight, Micah Ofstedahl wanders these trees and winding trails and senses the land, the living energy of Gaia.

This is neither the colonial land of Emerson or Thoreau, nor the arcadia of the painters of the Hudson River School, whose elegies to the divine landscape sang of the heavenly and sublime potential of a continent gifted by God to a pioneering people to possess and steward. This is a land of extended consciousness, a land of super-sensual experience, where we are visitors. Ofstedahl walks and remembers his experiences, and back at home, works the magic of concentrating the mood of his solitude in numinous nature into masterful imagery in his tiny studio. "It comes from a love of nature," he says, "being out here and doing a lot of hiking...the beauty of nature. That feeling you can get beyond. Rather than just painting the landscape as it is, adding that sense of mystery can possibly represent that extra feeling you're getting being there. It could be a meditative feeling, or just a spiritual feeling, being out in nature, being in awe of it. Not even just that landscape in front of you—the whole universe can be mind-blowing, that anything exists...You could look at a little bug, or a little blade of grass, and think about the soul that's in there, what's happening on the level of DNA, the atomic level, and just keep going, and all of that is mind-blowing too. You could say I'm representing that as well—that awe of the universe."

Certain, solid, and true, then, the transparent and ephemeral energy in the bend and twist of distortion that winds through his landscape paintings is a natural phenomenon, expressing a sense of the unseen, witnessed by a self-contained man accustomed to solitude and sensitive to the subtleties of sensation. The soft edges of the human senses shape the mysteries of the known dimensions that are beyond the range of human perception, these fine fields of shimmering energy that seem to bind the universe together. Ofstedahl explains, "For one of my recent paintings, the pattern I used for the clear distorted parts came from a magnetic field around the earth.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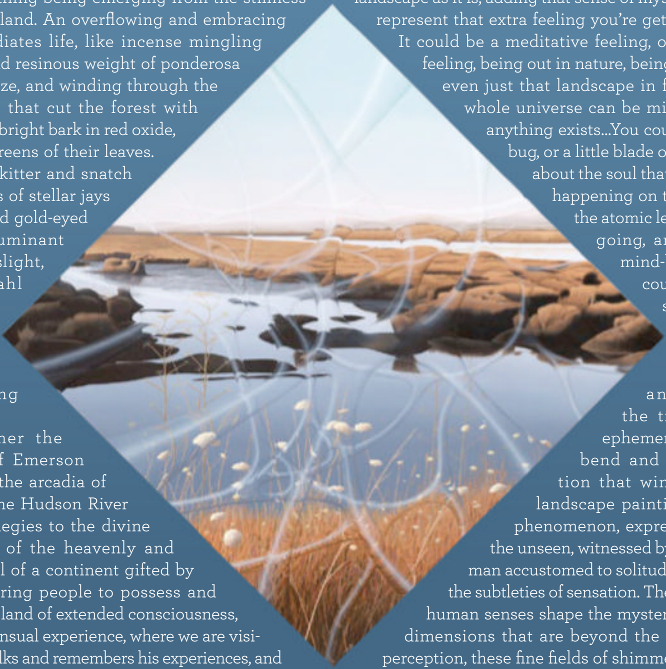
Fruitless Invitation, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24". Private collection.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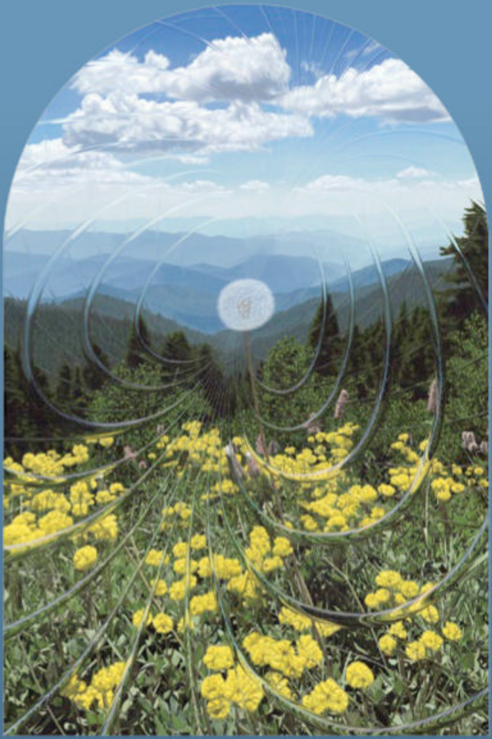
Traces of Pneuma, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30". Private collection.



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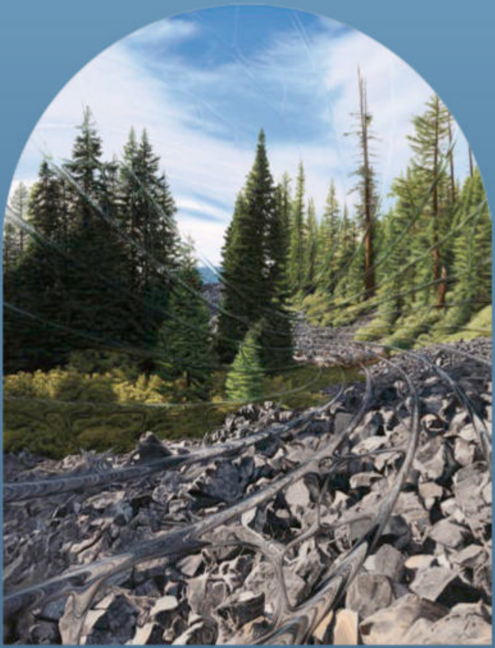

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Some people see the torus field. I dabble in that mystery. Some people would say it's absolutely real, and we have an aura, and chakras. That's a mystery I like to think about. …I want to explore and recognize there's more out there. It's a mystery. These clear things can represent a lot. A magnetic field is invisible to us, but it's real. We can measure it, observe it with special tools. Infrared, x-rays—we can observe these things, but not with our senses, our filters. *Traces of Pneuma* represented that interconnecting web of our past, present and future, and the effects we have on other people and the world, and vice versa, [i.e.] the butterfly effect—one little thing branches out and leads to another."

His mid-century home is set beside a graveyard and sleeping there, on the edge of silence in that liminal space between life and death, seems to have made him almost translucent himself, and he moves quietly through his house in a hushed harmony with the spirits. But his is a spirit of love for the living land, inhabiting the vivid life of our ancient earth, not a morbid desire to dwell in the underworld. He has found mira-

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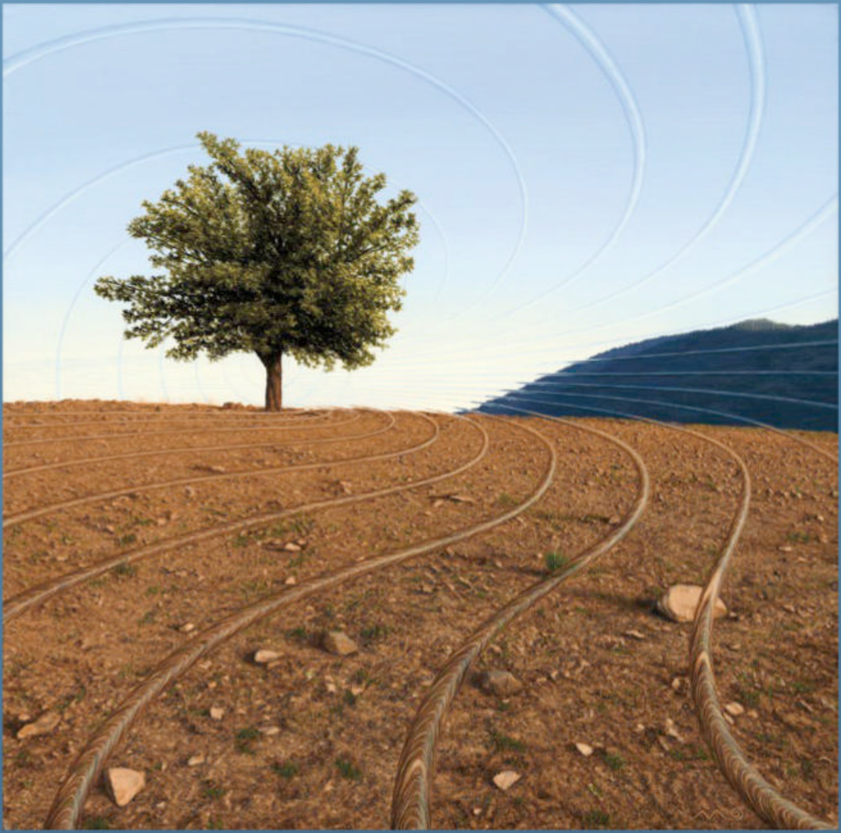

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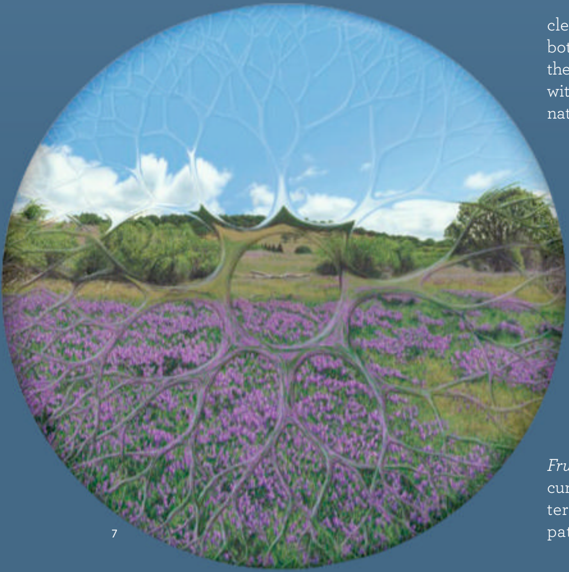

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cles in the threshold he inhabits, where he wanders between both the tiny scale of the minute and the magnificent size of the universe, following the tradition of 19th-century microscopy with an antiquarian fascination for the unknown, and treating nature as an unknown space of wonder and delight.

His earlier work was inspired by the zoologist Ernst Haeckel, whose drawings and paintings of microscopic biological forms are wonders of detail and the mysteries of the miniature life teeming all around us, but so small that we blunder about unaware of its existence. Intrigued, Ofstedahl imagined Haeckel's tiny creatures blown up and set in a surreal landscape, while maintaining their invisibility. He was lured to the contrast between the strangeness of extra-sensuality and the concrete, observable reality of what we can see. Haeckel's microscopic encyclopedia of invisible life opened a seemingly alien and unknown world of strange, beautiful and monstrous life, while evidently consistent, real and entirely natural—and Ofstedahl wondered about combining the two.

The first painting he did with a realist background was *Fruitless Invitation*, a wonderfully mysterious mixture of vines curling over the calm and still of reflecting pools, where scattered algae sprout mysterious white stems, and delicately patterned rhizomes form strange but beautiful, mutated

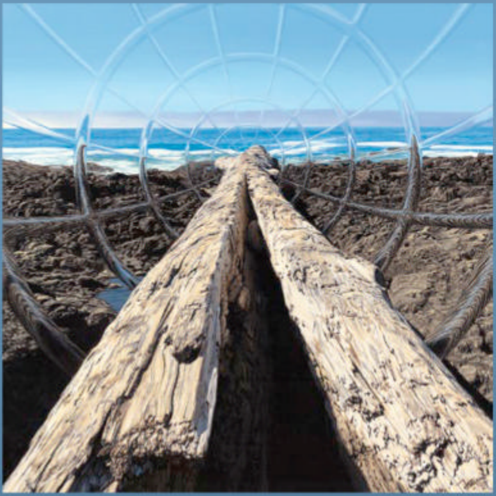
3
Untitled, 2025, acrylic on canvas mounted on panel, 36 x 24". Private collection.

4
Interstitial, 2024, acrylic on canvas mounted on panel, 24 x 18". Private collection.

5
Micah Ofstedahl in his studio.

6
A Different Light, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 12 x 12". Private collection.

7
Pathways, 2022, acrylic on canvas, 16". Private collection.



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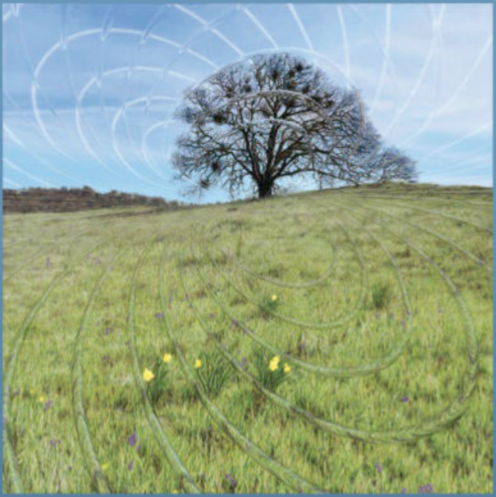

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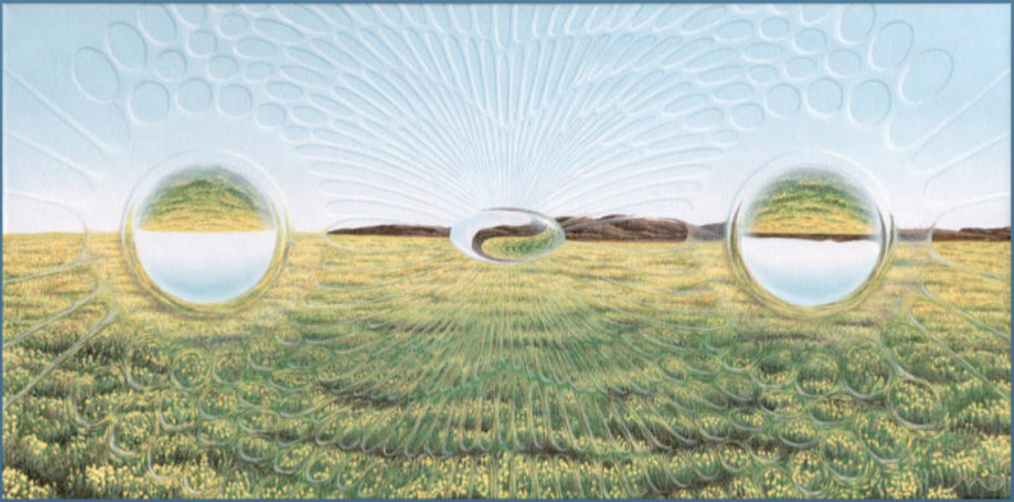

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pathways on a flattened plane. Almost invisible alien flowers hover like expanding blown glass in the air. Ofstedahl explains, "I had a sketch of some pitcher plants that were inspired by Haeckel's work. At some point I decided to use a photograph as reference and painted it fairly realistically, and painted the pitcher plants clear, and I was happy with the result. The next painting, *Like a Memory*, was again a realistic landscape and I used a pattern I had sketched out, a microscopic view from Haeckel, a diatom. I started making my own patterns for the clear, distorted parts, still using patterns inspired by nature, or radiolarians—microscopic, single-cellular marine organisms. My first exposure to his work was *Art Forms from the Ocean*, then I found some of his other work that branched off into other things. Great sources of inspiration!"

If Haeckel's scientific studies led to a disorienting and imperceptible reality, other artists shaped his imagination. Ofstedahl recalls his childhood muses from grade school, "M.C. Escher and Salvador Dali were creative inspirations, and piqued my interest in art, that you could do these weird, surreal things. It really struck me that if I could paint, that was the path I would go down. You can see the influence of Dali in my earlier work. ...I never thought I would paint realistic landscapes like this. There were some more current artists that inspired me, who are painting fantastic realism using realistic landscapes, like Hannah Yata, or Jean-Pierre Roy. Some of that kind of work inspired me too."

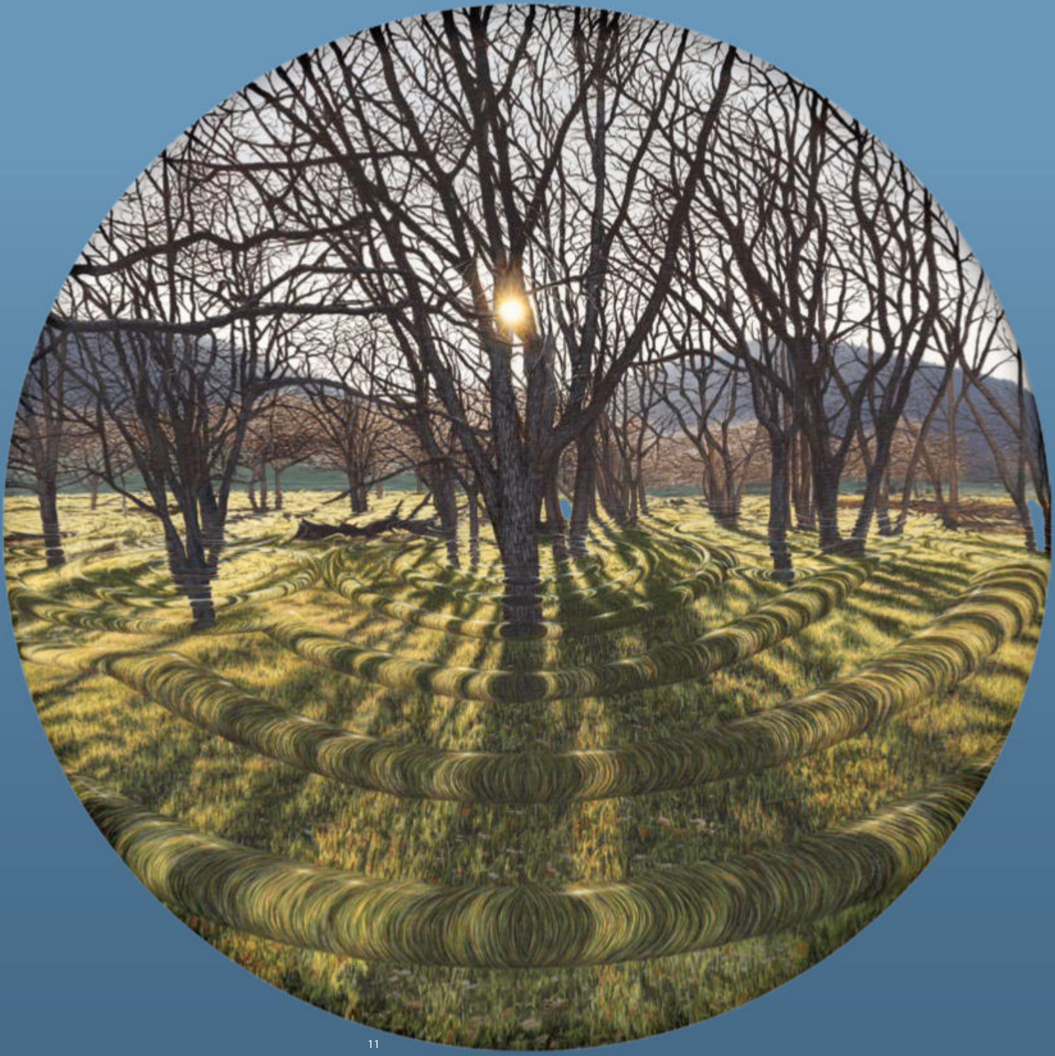
Ofstedahl explains his paintings as a vision of the

8
Time and Gravity, 2025, acrylic on panel, 12 x 12". Private collection.

9
Fields, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 16 x 16". Private collection.

10
Like a Memory, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 10 x 20". Private collection.

11
Vernal Luminosity, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 20". Private collection.



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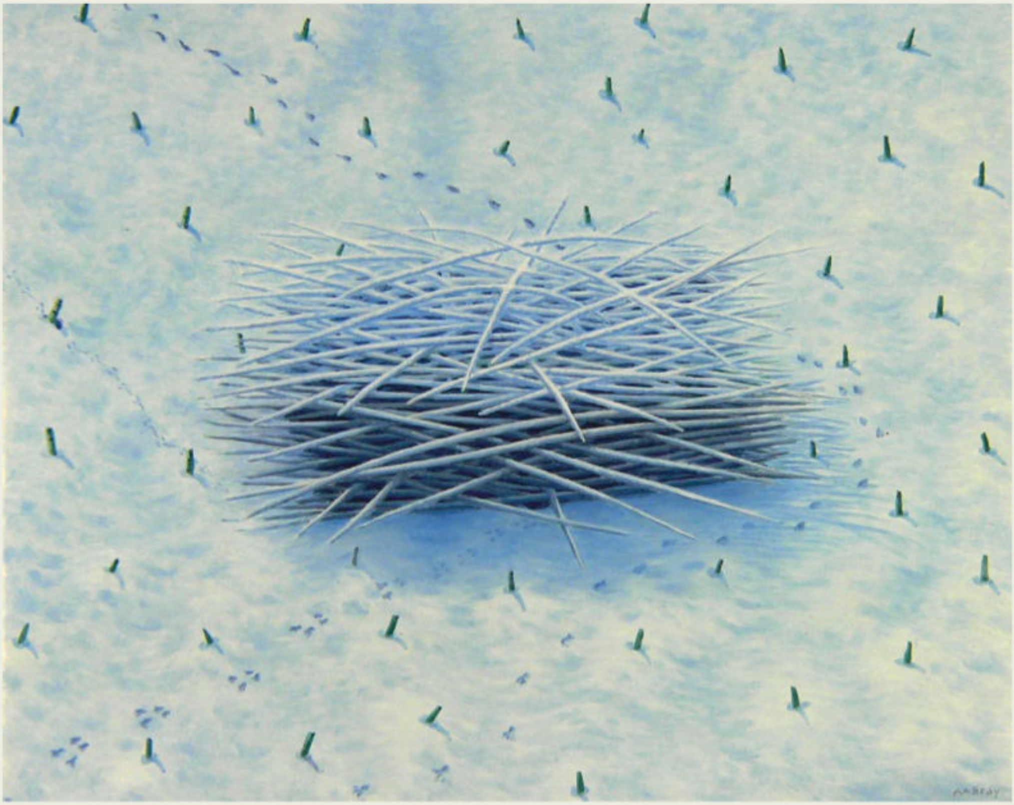
life of nature, but he seems to glide through reality as an otherworldly presence, a man who fell to earth, a dreamer. Perhaps the paintings are best understood as a perception of real life from the perspective of a guest of normality, created with such a lucid pleasure in natural phenomena that he seduces readers into desiring visionary experiences for themselves to see the world as he sees it from the outside in. Then the paintings are born of the tenuous and slippery place within the mind of an artist who dwells in the fragile space between dreams and reality. Every artist lives a double life and is aware of visiting illusions during periods of creative exploration. An artist is one who is uninjured by the dangers of a vivid imagination, and can wander unscathed through the places between the planes. The supreme artist is a dreamer who returns from the world of sleep with revelations, and offers a guide to life, sharing a parallel to reality that may shape perceptions by making ordinary things strange.

Passing between dreaming and waking, artists like Ofstedahl are not only imitators of the reality below, but emergent visionaries inspired by the cosmos above. They step across the bridged planes on a spiritual quest to express metaphysical truth, but always have one foot planted in the materiality that binds them to earth. Nature may be brutal, but the savagery of predation that defines survival has also led to the mystery of beauty. When an artist's heart touches the spirit of nature, the dream and the reality unite. ●

Michael Pearce is a dynamic writer, curator and critic, as well as a champion of art that emerges from popular culture and shapes the spirit of the age. He has published hundreds of articles about art and artists, and is author of Kitsch, Propaganda, and the American Avant-Garde.



1

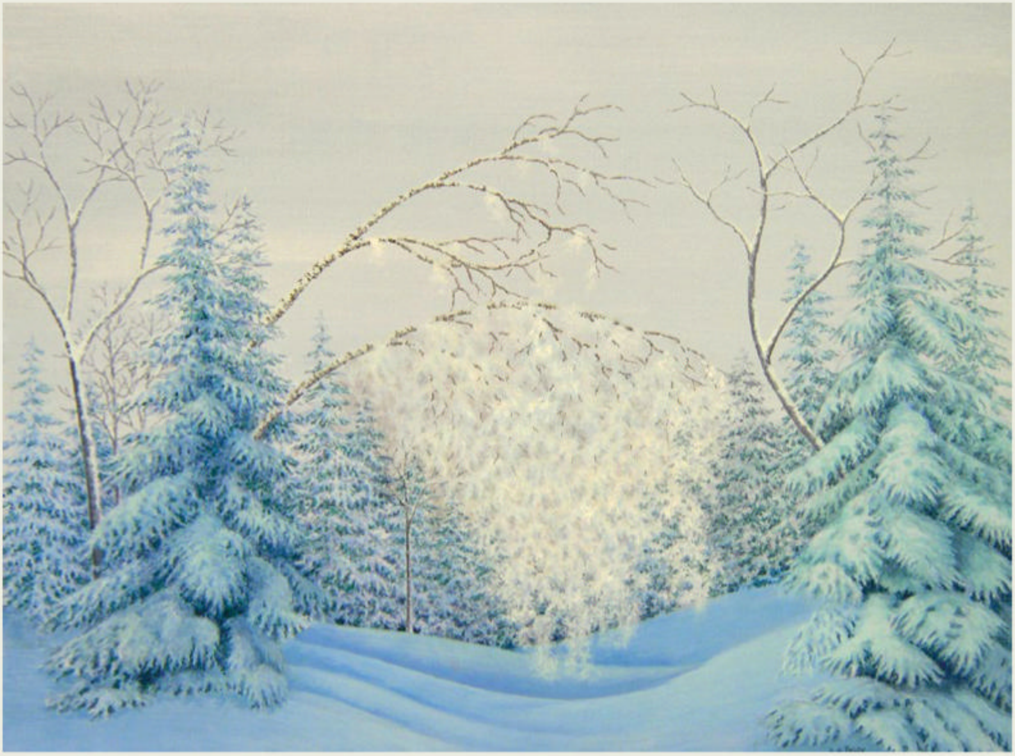
Ephemeral MOMENTS

Alan Bray captures the intricate subtleties and structures of the natural world in an intimate body of work on view in New York.

BY JOHN O'HERN

A lifetime of living in and experiencing rural Maine, a book by a French phenomenologist, and 14th- and 15th-century paintings he saw while studying in Florence have shaped Alan Bray into an artist who paints the unseen essence of the perceived landscape. The Maine essayist and art critic, Edgar Alan Beem declared, "Alan Bray is the visual poet laureate of nature, reclaiming central Maine even as man attempts to suburbanize it. His vision of Maine is the best and the purest I have seen."

The Poetics of Space by Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962) is one of Bray's favorite books (and was my favorite in architecture school). Bray remarks that it "just totally turned me upside down and changed



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my life in the sense that it gave me a way to look at the natural world that didn't have much to do with scenery, and it wasn't about finding a pretty scene. Instead, it was like looking at natural phenomena, and studying that, and finding the form and the structure and the processes that are involved in what you're actually looking at. That just completely opened me up…I'm not looking at scenes. I'm looking at natural phenomena, and then I either find or invent a scene that will help me to explicate that."

Bachelard wrote, "For our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word. If we look at it intimately, the humblest dwelling has beauty."

Bird nests, mouse burrows and farmhouses are all part of the landscape, and all are worthy of observation and study. All appear in Bray's paintings. *Alan Bray: Inhabited Landscapes*, is an exhibition of his recent paintings that opens at DFN Projects in New York City on April 30. It is Bray's fourth solo exhibition with Garvey | Simon. Elizabeth Garvey and her sister Catherine Simon founded the gallery in 2010. Garvey was co-director with Penny Schmidt of Schmidt-Bingham Gallery in New York when I borrowed a Bray painting for an exhibition at the Arnot Art Museum in 1997. In 2001 we were able to purchase one of his paintings for the permanent collection.

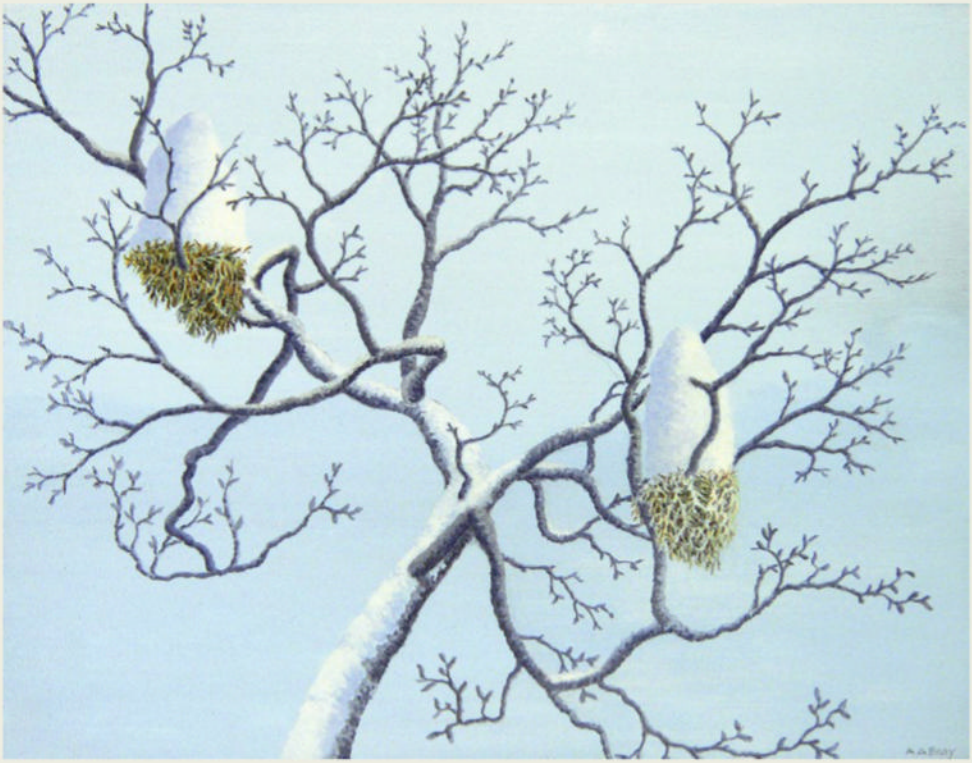
3

Bray grew up in Monson, Maine, immersed in the life of the outdoors—camping, hiking, fishing, climbing. He recalls being a "prodigious builder of things," like rafts and lean-tos. "If you didn't have it," he says, "you made it." He and his friends even built their own baseball field. He often spent summers in Hyde Park, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston where he could attend Red Sox games at Fenway Park and visit the Museum of Fine Arts. "It was the first time I saw real art," he says. "I was blown away by Monet.

1
Refuge, 2024, casein on panel, 16 x 20″

2
A Whisper Breaks the Silence, 2024, casein on panel, 15 x 20″

3
Alan Bray working on his painting *Hermit Thrush*. Photo by David Etnier. Courtesy the photographer.



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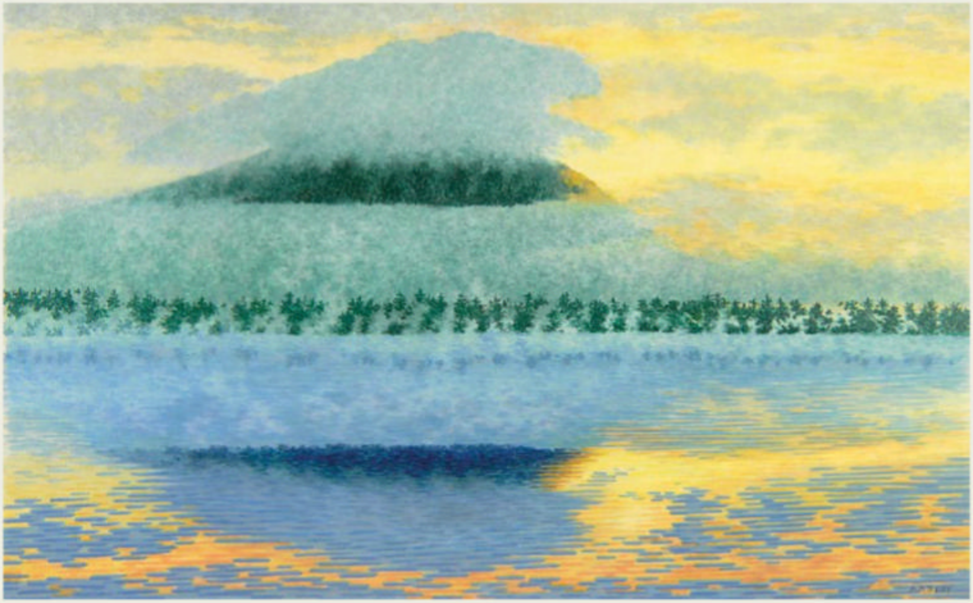

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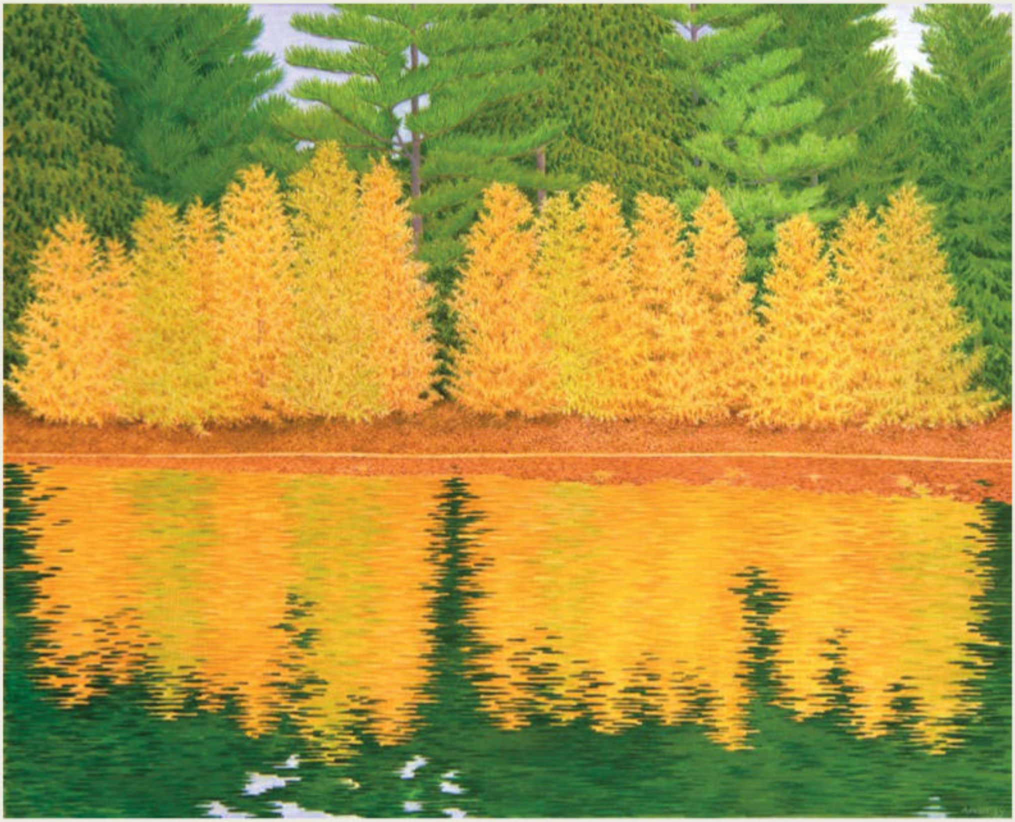

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I started making drawings and copying things but there was no reason to pursue art as a career."

He was good enough at baseball to receive a scholarship to Thomas College in nearby Waterville, Maine. When he told the president of the college that he really wanted to go to art school despite the fact that his friends thought it was a stupid idea, the college president thought it was a great idea. His girlfriend, now his wife of 60 years, Diana, "applied to schools on my behalf. I was accepted to the Art Institute of Boston, which was then the School of Practical Arts, which we called the 'School of Practically Arts.' It gave me a chance to catch up on basic things like perspective and figure drawing."

He later received his bachelor of arts in art education at the University of Southern Maine. While there, he was encouraged to attend the Villa Schifanoia graduate school of fine arts in Florence, Italy, where he later received a master of fine arts in painting.

"We were young and stupid and just up and went with one-way tickets," he recalls. "But I fell in love with Gothic painting and the work of Lorenzetti, Fra Angelico, Simone Martini, Giotto and others of that time. It was partly the unexpected qualities of pure primary colors, hard edges, the rudimentary perspective and the resulting compositional inventiveness that looked so modern and so alluring to me." He also began painting in casein on panel. Casein is a milk-based tempera that dries quickly and demands short quick brushstrokes built up in layers.

He has included several birds' nests from his collection in the current exhibition, the brushstrokes often emulating the delicate construction of the nests. In *Neighbors*, 2025, he depicts nests in a magnolia tree right outside his living room window. "The one on the left is a robin's nest, and I watched it being built this past spring. I have a chair under the tree and the robin made a fuss every time I sat there but did not abandon it. The other nest is only 24 inches from the window, but I only became aware of it when the leaves dropped away. It is either a vireo nest or a redstart. They are very clever and secretive builders. The robin's nest is crude, made by a young robin. After a snowstorm, two tall peaks piled up on the nests."

"*Refuge* is a brush pile in the deep winter," he says. "A fox had checked it out and scared off a squirrel and had given chase (at least that was my assessment of the scene)." The scene is an aerial view,

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Neighbors, 2025, casein on panel, 11 x 14"

5
First Light, 2024, casein on panel, 15 x 24"

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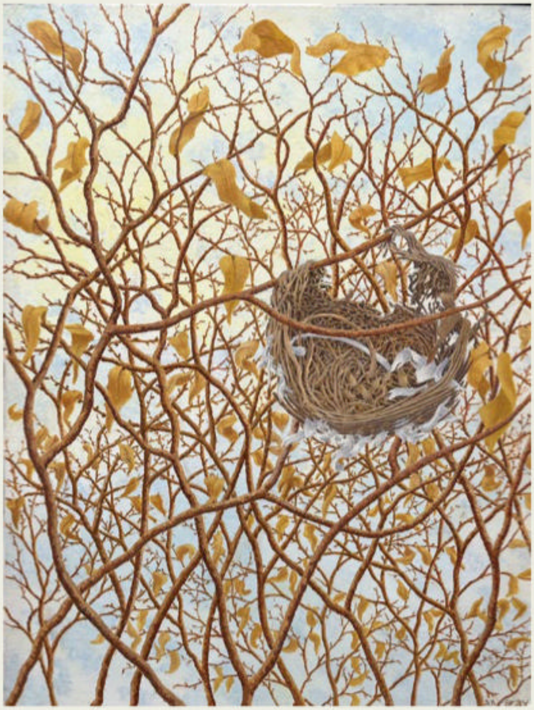
Larch, 2021, casein on panel, 16 x 20"



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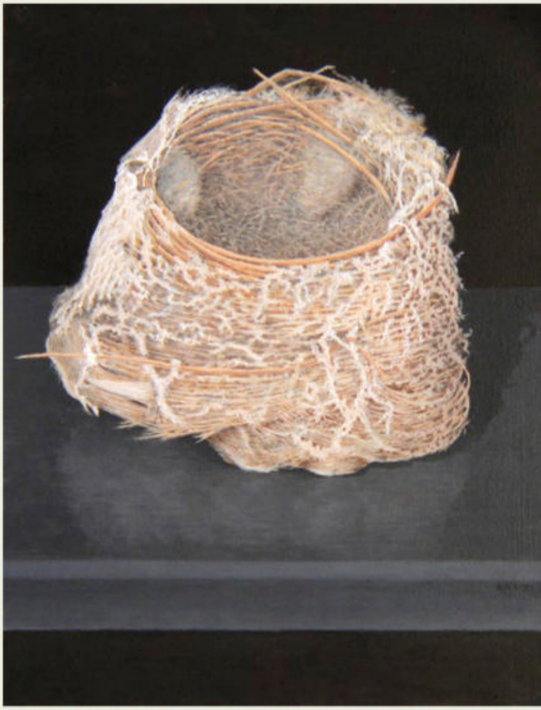

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Windblown, 2023, casein on panel, 12 x 9"

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Nest in a Nest, 2023, casein on panel, 12 x 9"

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Hermit Thrush, 2022, casein on panel, 16 x 20"

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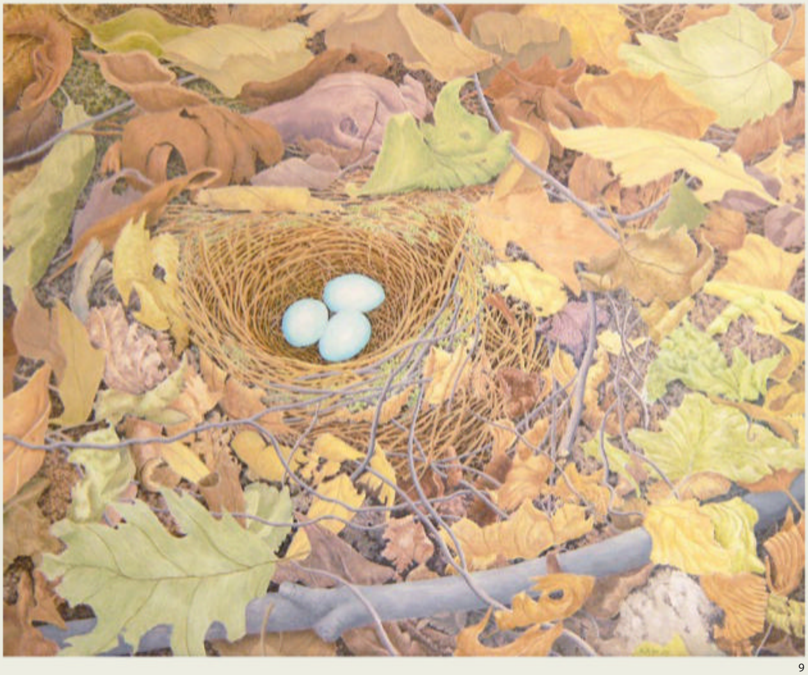
Relic, 2023, casein on panel, 16 x 20"



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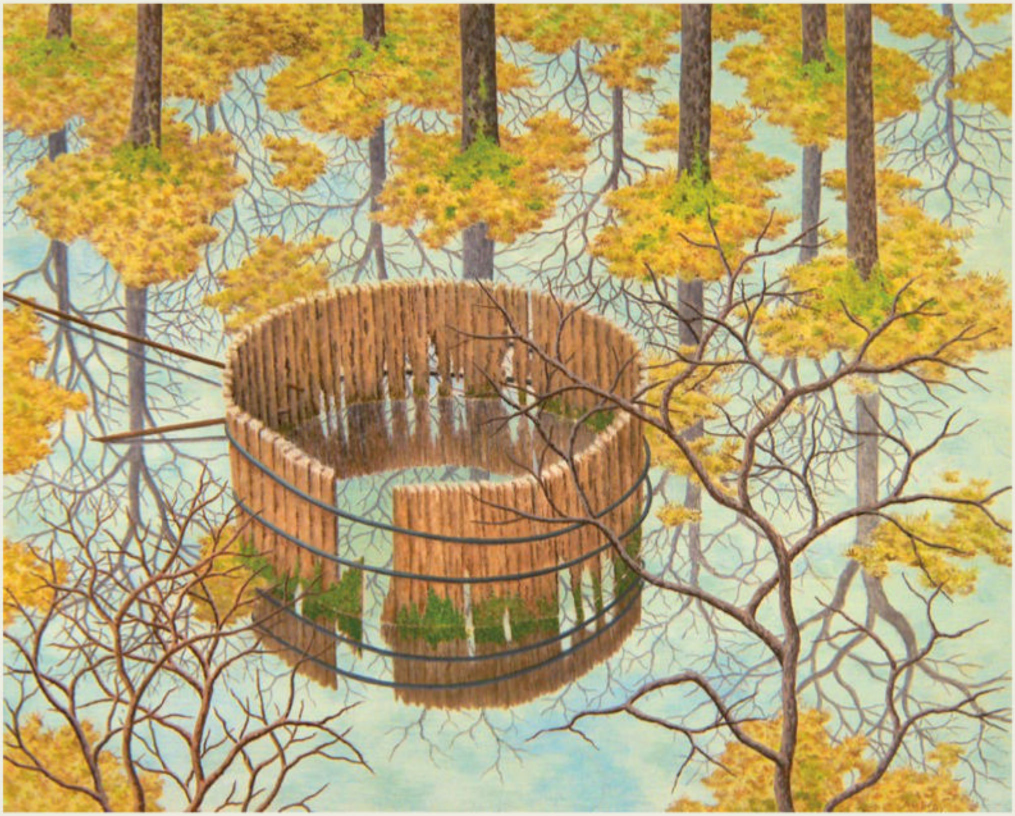

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looking down from above, his favorite point of view. There are ephemeral moments in nature that become lasting memories and, in the case of artists of all kinds, a bit of poetry, a passage of music or a painting. *A Whisper Breaks the Silence* is one of those paintings.

"The snowy painting," he comments, "is from a magical moment when after a big storm I was snowshoeing on a woods' road and a birch tree suddenly shed its load of snow and sprang back into the air. It made the faintest sound in the otherwise silent woods."

He explains, "A reflection is not simply a mirror image." In *Larch*, 2021, the yellow trees, evergreens and blue sky are reduced to fields of color in the rippling water. In *First Light*, 2024, a scene on his beloved Spencer Pond where he escapes with his buddies of many decades, he has allowed the reflection to dissolve into pixels.

Water appears often in his paintings. He reiterates that Bachelard gave him "a different way to think about the landscape, looking at natural phenomena. I could sit and watch water for a day."

The French writer recorded his own similar response to water, in "Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter." "I was born in a country of brooks and rivers, in a corner of Champagne, called Le Vallage for the great number of its valleys. The most beautiful of its places for me was the hollow of a valley by the side of fresh water, in the shade of willows...My pleasure still is to follow the stream, to walk along its banks in the right direction, in the direction of the flowing water, the water that leads life towards the next village...Dreaming beside the river....".

Bray acknowledges "a great reverence for nature in a general sort of way—not philosophical or intellectual." He agrees with Bachelard who wrote, "There is no word for the sense that you are a part of what you are looking at." ●

Alan Bray: Inhabited Landscape

April 30-May 30, 2025
Garvey | Simon at DFN Projects
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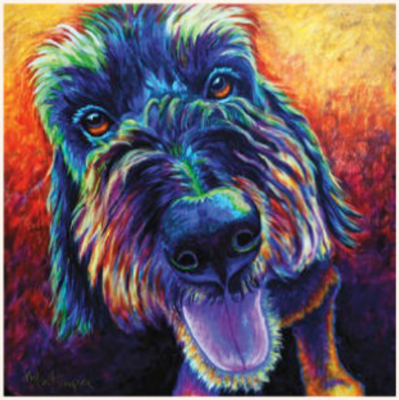
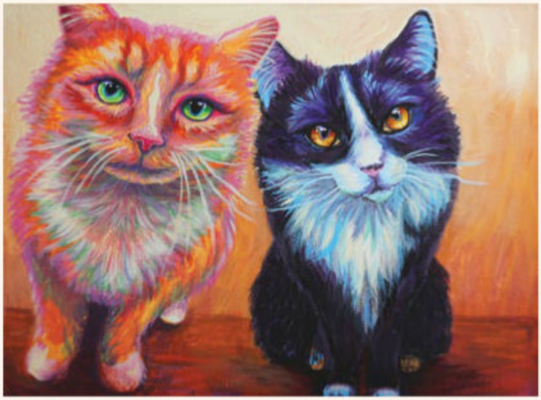

Guinness, Street sign, 24 x 36"


Tony and Gracie, Cabinet door, 17 x 22"

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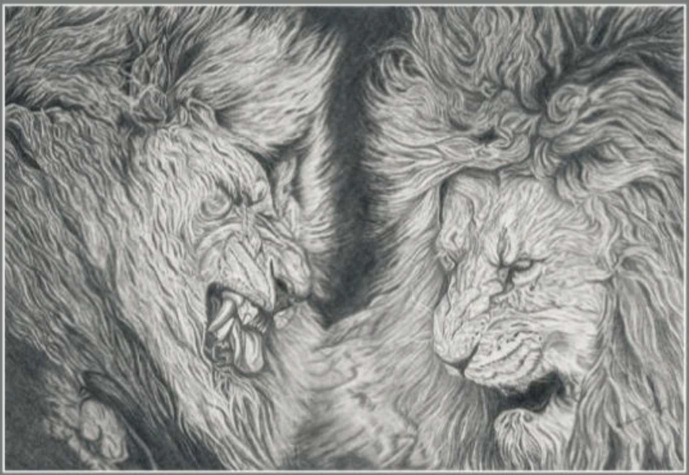
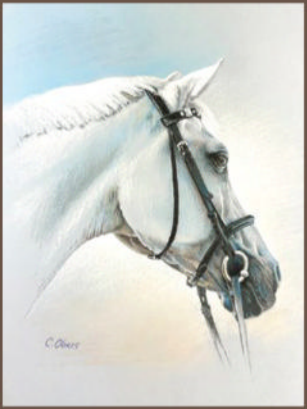
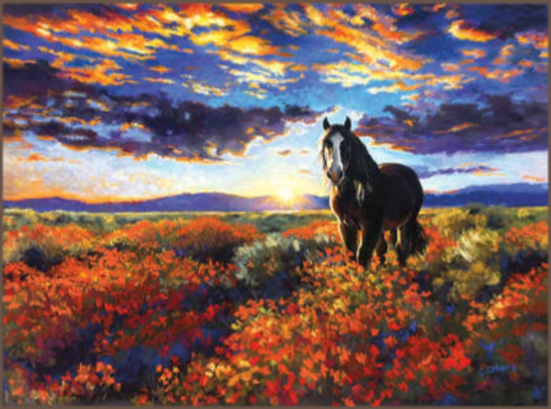

"Brothers Argue"
12"H x 16"W
Pencil on Bristol Board
Reference Photo
By Russ Bridges

www.lanatylerfineart.com
lanajtylerfineart@hotmail.com

970.217.3998
(please leave a message)



Beshad | Pastel | 10 × 8"



Journey to Oz | Pastel | 24 × 18"

Christine Obers

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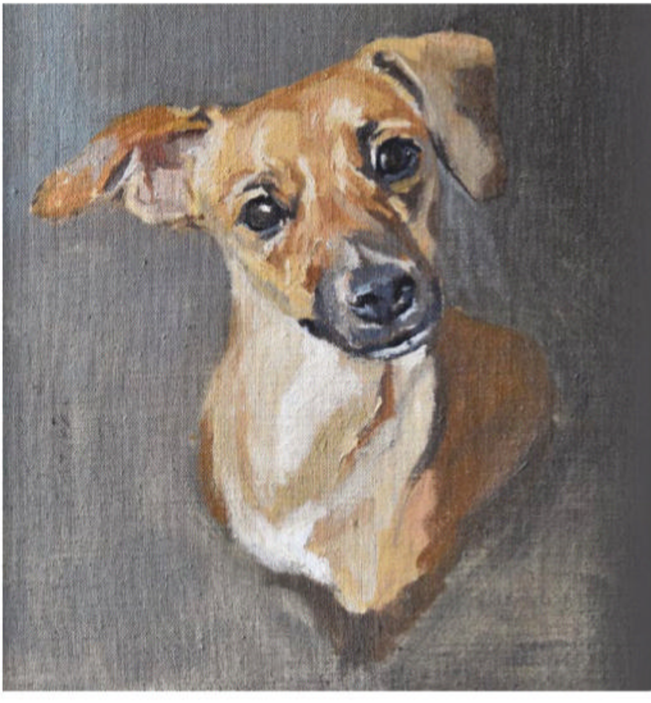
ChristineObersFineArt | chrisobers@gmail.com | **christineobers.com**



Laura Hausler

NASHVILLE, TN
LAURAHAUSLERFINEART.COM

Rocko, oil on linen & birch panel, 9 x 12"

JOHANNE MANGI FINE ART

Emma in the Snow, oil on linen, 14 x 11"

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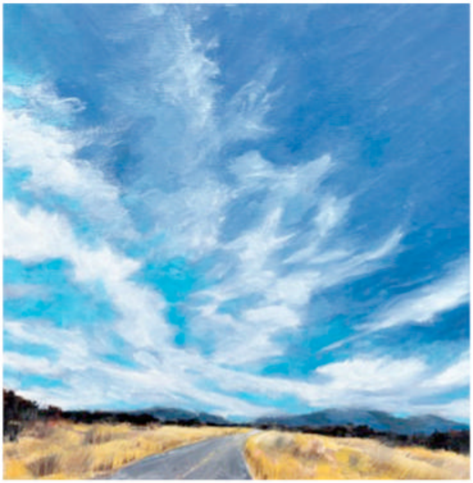
Kathleen M. Friedenberg

Bronzealive.com · 610.642.2942
Kfriedenberg1@verizon.net



"The Way In", oil, 18" x 18"

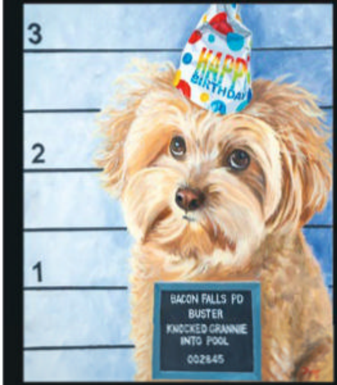
Cynthia Inson

Represented by
Nedra Matteucci Galleries
1075 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-982-4631 • matteucci.com

"Glorious, Rising", oil, 18" x 18"

Carol Luz Art

Original Oil Paintings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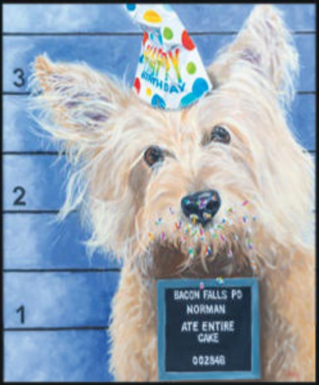
BACON FALLS PD
BUSTER
KNOCKED GRANNIE INTO POOL
002845

"Buster Knocked Grannie into Pool"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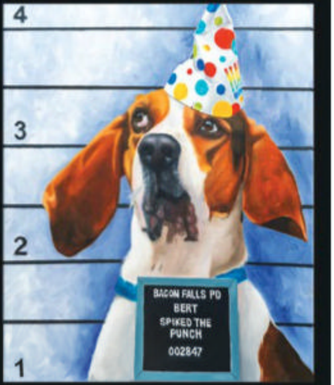
NORMAN
ATE ENTIRE CAKE
002846

"Norman Ate Entire Cake"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BACON FALLS PD
BERT
SPIKED THE PUNCH
002847

"Bert Spiked The Punch"

www.carolluzart.com
carol@carolluzart.com

TUNE IN TO HEAR THE STORIES OF TODAY'S TOP ARTISTS AND INDUSTRY EXPERTS.

VAN WECHEL • ERIC BOWMAN • MARK SUBLETTE • MICHAEL DUCHEMIN• TIM
BLUEFLINT RAMEL • VICTORIA ADAMS • BIRDIE REAL BIRD • DARRYL DEAN
BE BEGAY • DENISE WALLACE • MATAGI SORENSEN • ALLIN
MA AG AVID
RO SANCHEZ • KIM PEONE • THE BENNETT
PR CE QUANNIE • T • BRIAN LEBEL • CALANDRA
CO OWN • GREG BEECHAM • AYANA ROSS • CU ON
• RANDY L. BARTON • GREG SCHAAF • JESSE ROBBINS • JOHN N •
FRANK GONZALES GEORGE HALLMARK • MARLA ALLISON • D AN
TYRA SHACKLEFORD • LISA KOENIGSBERG • JOSH ELLIOTT • BRIAN COTE •

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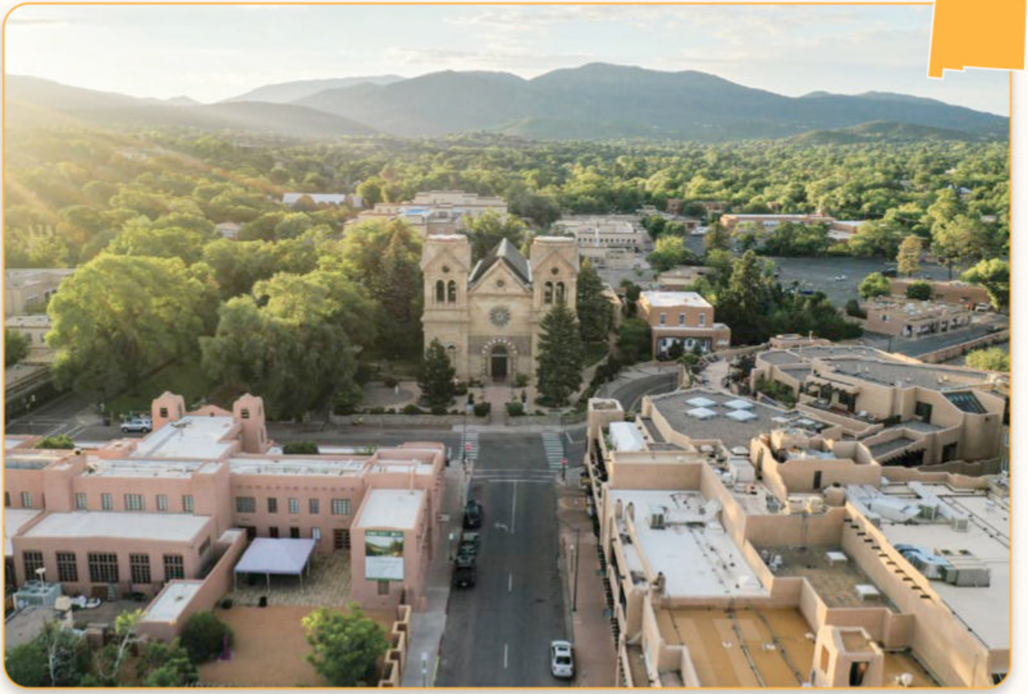
THE ART LOVER'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING FINE ART IN

SANTA FE

INTRODUCTION
BY SARAH GIANELLI

THE ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA. PHOTO COURTESY NEW MEXICO TRUE.



An aerial view of Santa Fe Plaza and Cathedral Courthouse. Courtesy Tourism Santa Fe.

With 250 galleries, more than a dozen museums and back-to-back world-class events throughout the year, Santa Fe is the crown jewel of art and culture in the Southwest. One of the leading art markets in the country, the City Different boasts four arts district brimming with galleries, boutiques, restaurants and artist studios. More than 80 such businesses line the easily walkable half-mile strip along Historic Canyon Road, also home to seasonal festivals throughout the year where artists create and mingle with collectors in the open air.

The area around Santa Fe's historic Plaza is also home to quite a few galleries where you can find traditional painting and sculpture, as well as Native arts, art jewelry, pottery and photography. There are also several museums around the Plaza, including the New Mexico Museum of Art, the popular Georgia O'Keeffe Museum and the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts.

Finally, don't forget to check out the hip Railyard Arts District, where most of the galleries lean contemporary and are housed in sleek, industrial-style warehouses. Plan your visit to the neighborhood to coincide with the famed Santa Fe Farmers' Market, where you can shop produce, plants and so much more, all sourced from Northern New Mexico. Two other pockets of creative energy in an industrial setting can be found along Baca Street and in the Siler Rufina District.

Dixon
Cooperative
market

Courtesy Dixon Studio Tour.

The number of cultural events throughout the year in Santa Fe are too numerous to do them justice here, but we would be remiss not to mention at least a few arts-related highlights. *Santa Fe Art Week* kicks off on July 10 with the 21st annual *International Folk Art Market*, followed by contemporary art fair *Art*

STOP
NO TRAIN HORN
NTA FE RAILYARD
STOP

The Railyard District is one of several hubs of creativity in the City Different, and host to the popular weekly Santa Fe Farmers' Market. Courtesy Tourism Santa Fe.

More than a hundred art galleries, jewelry stores, boutiques, artist studios, and gourmet restaurants line the half-mile Historic Canyon Road arts district. Courtesy Visit Canyon Road.

Santa Fe, which opens the next day; with dozens of art experiences and events in galleries and studios citywide through Sunday, July 20. August brings the *Santa Fe Indian Market* and with it droves of artists, collectors, exhibitions and even out-of-town galleries for the city's signature event. Now in its 103rd year, the 2025 *Santa Fe Indian Market*, recognized as one of the largest and most prestigious juried Native art show in the world, takes place August 16 and 17 in and around the Plaza.

With endless art opportunities to explore and experience in Santa Fe, it's important to remember that the vibrant concentration of creativity in the City Different radiates throughout the region, state and beyond. In the remainder of this special section, not only will we highlight top galleries, events, organizations and artists in Santa Fe, but we've put together some other sites to see, events to attend and adventures to enjoy in the surrounding region. We are sure that New Mexico, no matter what time of year you visit or where you go, will live up to its motto of "the Land of Enchantment."

EVENTS TO REMEMBER

A Santa Fe tradition, the Burning of Zozobra takes place the last weekend of August. Photograph by K.D. Leperi.

BURNING OF ZOZOBRA

If Burning Man seems like too much of a commitment, why not check out Santa Fe's historic end-of-summer celebration—the Burning of Zozobra—on August 29? Now in its 101st year, the cultural event is believed to cleanse the city and its people of anything negative that transpired over the past year. Attendees write down their sorrows and fears, hurts and habits, and stuff them into Zozobra, a mythic 50-foot-tall monster marionette that is then set on fire amid fireworks and revelry. Now presented by the Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe in Fort Marcy Park, William Howard "Will" Shuster, Jr. created Zozobra in 1924 for a private party for Los Cinco Pintores, a group of artists and writers who made their way to New Mexico in the 1920s. www.burnzozobra.com

THE DIXON STUDIO TOUR

Held annually on the first weekend of November, the Dixon Studio Tour is a self-guided tour of the Embudo Valley's many art studios, galleries and homegrown businesses. Tucked along a picturesque canyon 26 miles south of Taos, Dixon not only includes roughly 30 artists' studios to visit, it's also home to a charming local winery and a garlic farm that welcomes visitors. Throughout the festive event, you'll find everything from painting, photography and jewelry to stoneware, wearable art, herbal bath and beauty products, handmade chocolates, local wines and roving musicians and performers. Now in its 44th year, the Dixon Studio Tour is the longest continuously running artist studio tour in all of New Mexico and definitely worth experiencing firsthand. www.dixonarts.org

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta returns to the city October 4 through 12. Photo courtesy New Mexico True.

ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA

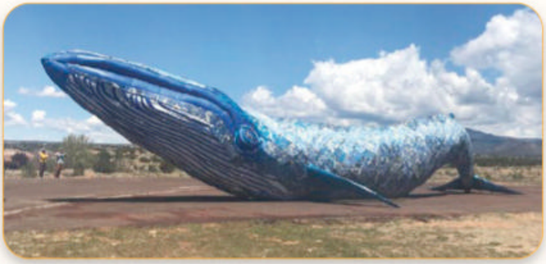
For more than three decades, visitors from all over the world have been flocking to New Mexico to experience the *Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta*, the largest ballooning event on earth, also billed as the most photographed event in the world, and the largest annual international event held in the United States. From October 4 through 12, the crisp, cerulean New Mexican skies become a rainbow of color as hundreds of balloons lift off from Albuquerque's Balloon Fiesta Park. A crowd favorite are the early morning Mass Ascensions as the enormous balloons ascend gracefully skyward and, for the night owls, the magical "balloon glow" as they light up the night sky. Day or night, the event is a visual delight sure to invoke a sense of awe and wonder. www.balloonfiesta.com

FOR THE KIDDOS

Enjoy food, drink and entertanment aboard the Sky Railway. Photo courtesy Tourism Santa Fe.

SKY RAILWAY

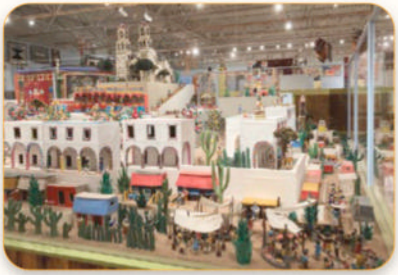
Whether you're a history buff, music lover, railfan or someone who enjoys soaking up beautiful surroundings, traveling the historic rail between Santa Fe and Lamy, New Mexico, aboard Sky Railway has something for everyone, of any age. The roughly three-hour adventure begins with a complimentary glass of champagne, followed by live entertainment, great food and beverage options, and tremendous views of the desert landscape—and maybe even one of those legendary New Mexico sunsets. www.skyrailway.com



Ethyl the Whale, an enormous sculpture made out of recycled plastic, can be found on the campus of Santa Fe Community College.

ETHYL THE WHALE

Located behind Santa Fe Community College is Ethyl the Whale, an 82-foot, life-sized sculpture of a blue whale made out of hand-recycled plastic. It was created by San Francisco artists Yustina Salnikova and Joel Stockdill to bring awareness to the negative impact of plastics on the environment, and was named after its polyethylene body. Originally built for the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, the Santa Fe-based art collective Meow Wolf acquired Ethyl in 2019 and installed it in the desert landscape. Take in the enormous work of art by day—by car or mountain bike—or enjoy it illuminated at night. www.sfcc.edu/ethyl-the-whale



Children and adults alike will be wowed by the Girard Wing of the Museum of International Folk Art. Photo courtesy the Museum of International Folk Art.

THE MUSEUM OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK ART, GIRARD WING

The whimsical wonderland that is the Museum of International Folk Art (MOIFA) sits atop Santa Fe's Museum Hill, across from the Museum of Indian Art and Culture, with fantastic views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The largest museum of its kind, its collections include more than 135,000 objects that celebrate our colorful global art community. The Girard Wing, which holds the vast majority of the museum's holdings and its only permanent display, was designed and filled by indefatigable collector Alexander Girard with a dizzying array of folk art, toys, miniatures and textiles from around the world that will delight the inner child in all. www.moifa.org

SIDE TRIP

Cerrillos is one of several quirky towns that dot the Turquoise Trail Scenic Byway between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Courtesy New Mexico True.

TURQUOISE TRAIL NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

Named for the rich turquoise deposits found throughout the area, this byway between Albuquerque and Santa Fe carves through otherworldly rock outcroppings, piñon and juniper-dotted hills, and a few delightfully quirky towns. Perfect for a one-way jaunt between the two cities, the 50-mile scenic byway takes only a bit longer to drive than the interstate most travelers take and is far more enjoyable! Pause atop Sandia Crest to take in the breathtaking view and be sure to make pitstops in the historic, colorful mining towns of Golden, Madrid and Cerrillos, for a taste of the local art, crafts, theater, music, museums and restaurants. www.turquoisetrail.org

Ra Paulette's Hand-Carved Caves.

La Cieneguilla Petroglyphs near Santa Fe contains thousands of rock art examples dating from the 13th to 17th century. Courtesy Tourism Santa Fe.

RA PAULETTE'S HAND-CARVED CAVES

About an hour north of Sante Fe, near the hot springs haven of Ojo Caliente, are a series of ornate hand-carved caves by New Mexico artist Ra Paulette. For over three decades, Paulette has been painstakingly digging, chiseling, carving and sculpting sandstone into elaborate subterranean sanctuaries, as a kind of spiritual calling. Paulette gained recognition through the 2014 Oscar-nominated documentary *Cavedigger*. Today many of his caves are privately commissioned, but there is one you can (legally) visit. The "Windows of the Earth" cave is located on the grounds of Origin at Rancho de San Juan, a health and wellness resort just 20 miles from Georgia O'Keeffe's home in Abiquiu. Guided tours for non-guests are available. www.originnewmexico.store

LA CIENEGUILLA PETROGLYPHS

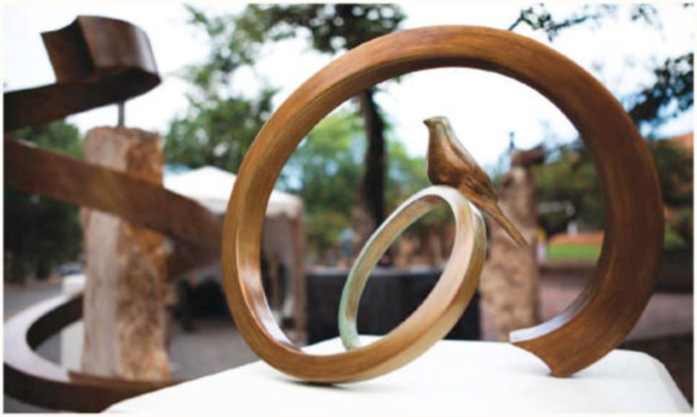
Hundreds of petroglyphs, dating from pre-contact time and the Spanish colonial era, can be found along this mesa above the Santa Fe River. Most of the petroglyphs were placed there by Keresan-speaking puebloan people living in the area between the 13th and 17th centuries. The descendants of these people now live down the Santa Fe River along the Rio Grande at the Cochiti and Santo Domingo Pueblos. The area is known for the great number of hump-backed flute player images and a great variety of bird figures. The site is also of interest to those tracing the route of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, as the ancient road passed along here as well. A short 1-mile loop trail managed by the Bureau of Land Management provides hikers a glimpse into the past as well as gorgeous views of the surrounding area. www.blm.gov/visit/la-cieneguilla-petroglyphs

VISIT SANTA FE

Santa Fe Community Convention Center,
201 W. Marcy Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501
(800) 777-2489, www.visitsantafe.com

Santa Fe, New Mexico, one of the largest art markets in the United States, has been a hub for creativity since its founding in 1610. Nestled in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, its dramatic landscape, clean air and 320-plus days of sunshine have long attracted artists. Many travel to the City Different to showcase their work at the city's annual art markets or they comfortably make Santa Fe their home. It's no wonder Santa Fe was designated the first UNESCO Creative City in the world, this year celebrating its 20th anniversary with *GENERATION/S: Tradition as Innovation* events.

Local, regional and international artists are represented in Santa Fe's 250-plus world-class galleries, 25 museums, scores of events and shows, and dozens of renowned art markets. Notable markets include the 21st *International Folk Art Market* (July 10 to 13), where 160 master artists from more than 50 countries showcase their work bazaar-*style in the Railyard District*. On the historic Plaza, don't miss the 73rd *Traditional Spanish* and 39th *Contemporary Hispanic* markets (July 26 to 27), and SWAIA's *Santa Fe Indian Market* (August 15 to 17), the world's largest intertribal art market. While summer is a peak season for art, Santa Fe's creative spirit thrives year-round.



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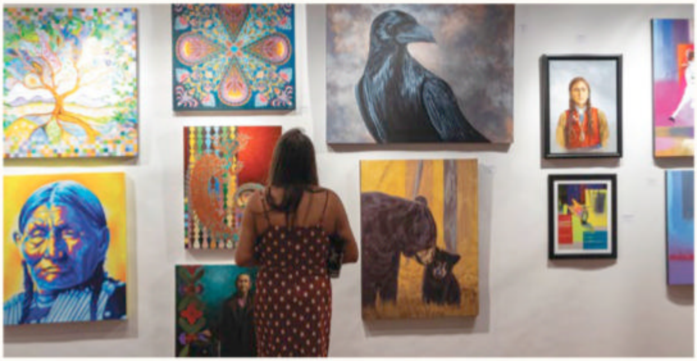

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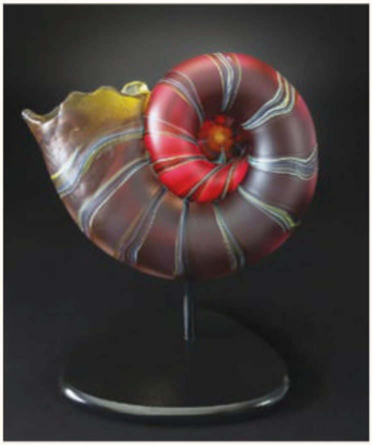
1
A sculpture on display at the *Contemporary Hispanic Market*, created by one of more than 100 juried artists, invited to show their work.

2
A visitor studies the paintings of a couple of Native American artists among the 1,000 who show their work at *Santa Fe Indian Market*.

3
When the Pueblo Revivalist-style New Mexico Museum of Art opened in 1917, it was the first building in the state dedicated to art.



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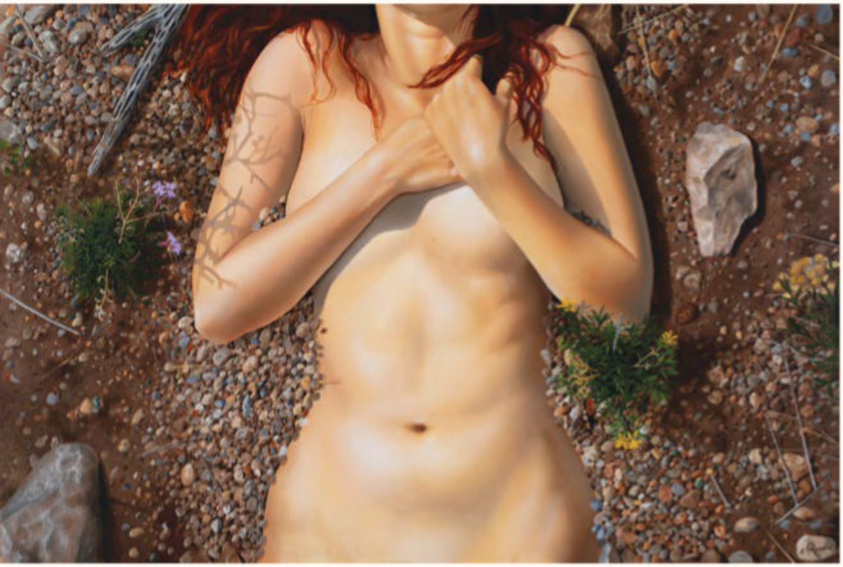
BLUE RAIN GALLERY

544 S. Guadalupe Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501, (505) 954-9902
info@blueraingallery.com
www.blueraingallery.com

Established in 1993, Blue Rain Gallery has spent over 30 years fostering cultural appreciation, blending innovation with tradition and championing artistic diversity. With a strong focus on regional, Native American and fine studio glass art, the gallery represents a dynamic roster of over 50 living artists who work across a wide range of mediums including ceramics, paintings, bronze, glass and jewelry.

Beyond its role as a premier fine art gallery, Blue Rain extends its dedication to craftsmanship and creativity through the Blue Rain Print Shop, where fine art meets versatile design, offering high-quality prints and unique artistic expressions. Further enriching the art conversation, the Blue Rain Gallery Podcast—hosted by founder Leroy Garcia—provides an intimate exploration of the Santa Fe art world, offering insights into the creative process, artist inspirations and the evolving landscape of contemporary art. Through these endeavors, Blue Rain Gallery, which has a second location in Durango, Colorado, continues to push the boundaries of artistic excellence while honoring the cultural traditions that inspire its collections.



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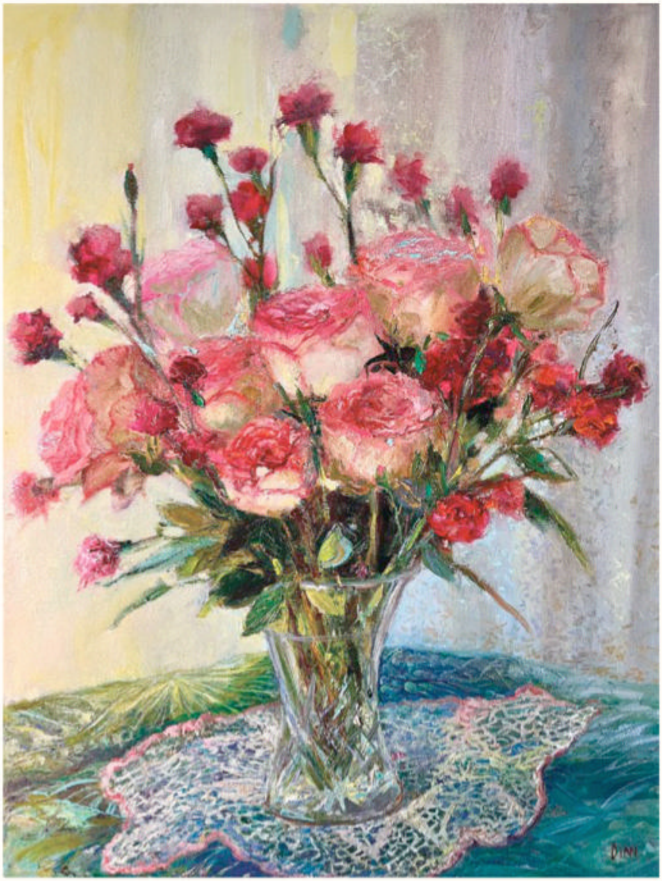
1
Blue Rain Gallery, *Aurora*, blown and sculpted glass, 9 x 8½", by Kelly O'Dell.

2
An exterior view of Blue Rain Gallery in Santa Fe.

3
Blue Rain Gallery, *Sandia Transplant*, oil on canvas, 24 x 36", by Eric Romero.



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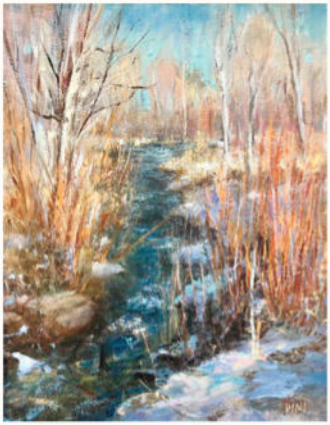

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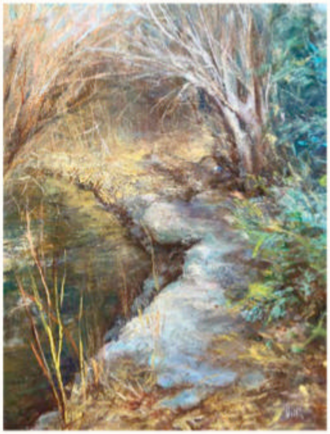

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MADINA CROCE

(505) 438-8866
diniart@cybermesa.com
www.madinacroce.com

Award-winning Santa Fe impressionist painter Madina Croce, who signs her paintings “DINI,” loves creating lush florals and still life paintings in her Santa Fe garden. Her landscape paintings, *Willows and Water* and *Where the Songbirds Live* were painted in plein air just a hundred yards apart at one of her favorite spots in the foothills above Santa Fe. “I see so many beautiful paintings to make as I hike around these mountains,” she says. “It is always different; each painting tells a special story of a moment in time.”

Croce’s winter months are spent creating commissioned work for her collectors. “I love creating truly unique pieces for my collectors,” she says. “I am so grateful to be able to do what I love and to share what I see with the world.”

Croce shows her paintings March through December in Santa Fe’s vibrant artist’s outdoor show community, and welcomes studio visits by appointment. Find her show schedule on her website at www.madinacroce.com/events.

1
Madina Croce, *Brighten my Day*, oil, 30 x 24"

2
Madina Croce, *Willows and Water*, oil, 14 x 11"

3
Madina Croce, *Where the Songbirds Live*, oil, 16 x 12"

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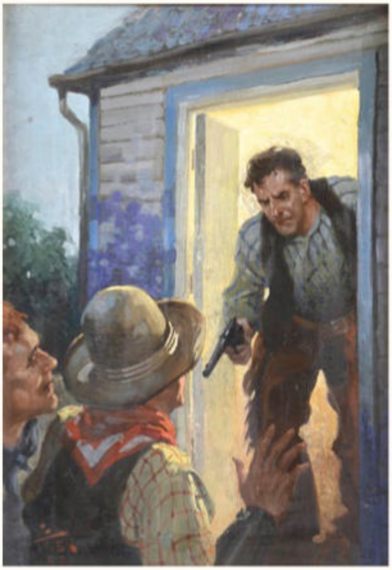

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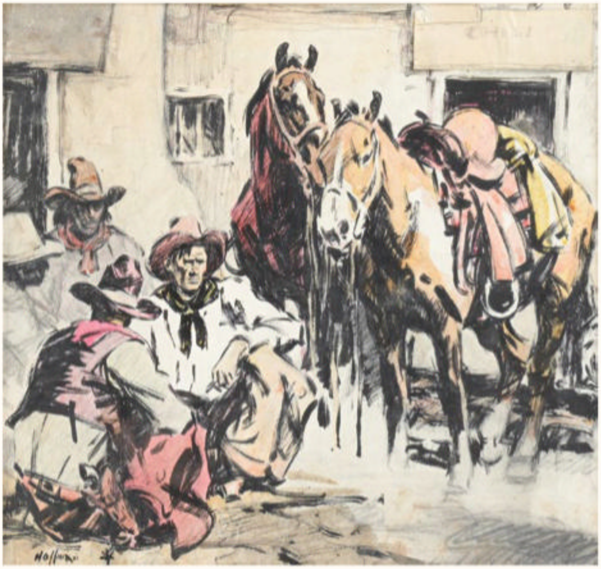

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1
Enthusiastic bidding at a previous *Old West Show & Auction*.

2
Morphy Auctions & Old West Events, *Hands Up*, oil on canvas, 26 x 18", by Harry T. Fisk (1887-1974). **Estimate: $3/5,000**

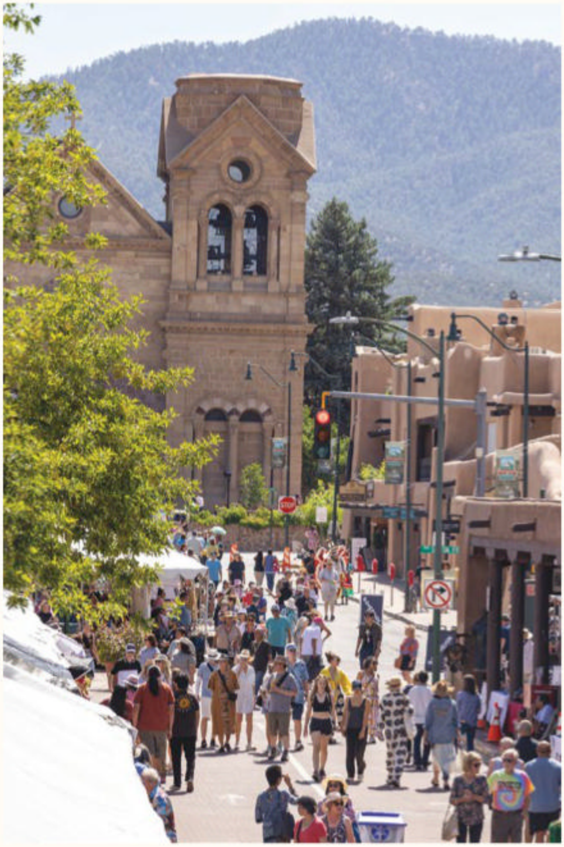
3
Morphy Auctions & Old West Events, *Untitled*, watercolor and mixed media, 12 x 13", by Frank Hoffman (1888-1958). **Estimate: $3/4,000**

MORPHY AUCTIONS & OLD WEST EVENTS

cheryl.goyda@morphyauctions.com
www.oldwestevents.com

Leading auction and art dealers Morphy Auctions and Brian Lebel's Old West Events will present the 2025 *Old West Show & Auction,* which will offer art and antiques along with Native American material. This year's sale will offer works by Harvey Johnson, Nick Eggenhofer, Nick Firfires, Will James, Frank Hoffman, Till Goodan, Harry Fisk, Wayne Baize and many other notable artists. There will also be a grouping of pulp art from the likes of Sam Cherry, Carl Hantman, Tom Lovell and more. Photography will include William Henry Jackson, Edward Weston and L.A. Huffman.

The *Old West Show & Auction* takes place June 20 to 21. Santa Fe is the perfect community for the gathering of incredible exhibitors from all over the country. The galleries and shops are a fitting backdrop for the finest of Western artwork, cowboy collectibles, Native American artifacts, textiles and jewelry, all of which are available for purchase at the show, held at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center.



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SOUTHWEST ASSOCIATION FOR INDIAN ARTS (SWAIA)

121 Sandoval Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501,
(505) 983-5220, info@swaia.org
www.swaia.org

The Southwestern Association for Indian Arts (SWAIA) has been a leader in promoting Native American art and culture for over a century. Best known for the *Santa Fe Indian Market (SFIM)*, the largest and oldest Native American art market, SWAIA brings together artists, collectors and art enthusiasts to celebrate Native craftsmanship.

In addition to the *Santa Fe Indian Market*, which takes place August 16 and 17 this year, SWAIA offers a range of unique experiences, including *SWAIA Native Fashion Week (SNFW)*, a week-long celebration of Native American fashion designers happening this month beginning May 7, and the *Winter Indian Market (WIM)*, a collector-focused event in late November. These experiences foster cultural exchange and highlight the diversity of Native American artistry.

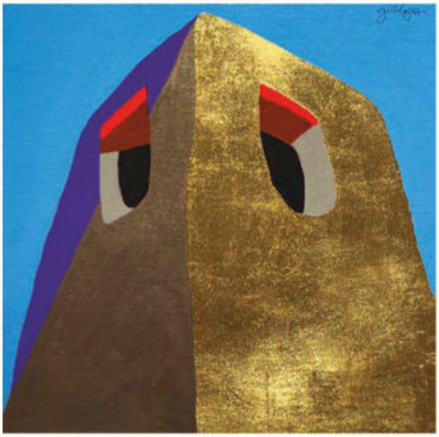
SWAIA's reach also extends digitally, providing year-round access to Native artists through the SWAIA Digital Market, social media and newsletters. This ensures that Native American art remains accessible to a global audience.

At its core, SWAIA is dedicated to honoring both traditional and contemporary Native American art, creating spaces for cultural connection, and promoting Native artists on a global scale.

1
SWAIA's 2024 *Santa Fe Indian Market*. Photo Credit: Gabriella Marks / Santa Fe Indian Market 2024.

2
***SWAIA** Native Fashion Week 2024*. Image credit: Gilbert Terrazas via Indigenous Fashion Collective, Designer: Lesley Hampton | Model: Povi Rosa-Chavez.

3
Native American regalia showcase at the 2023 *Santa Fe Indian Market*. Image credit: Kitty Leaken.



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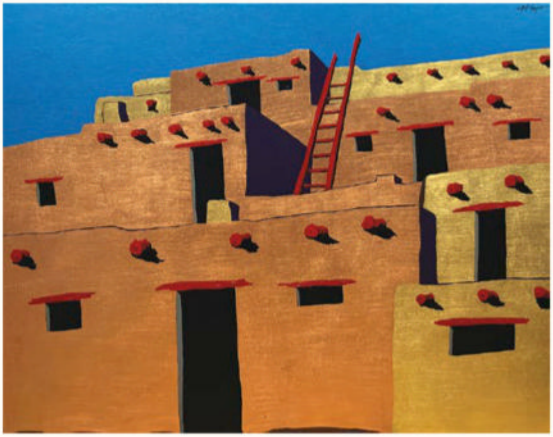

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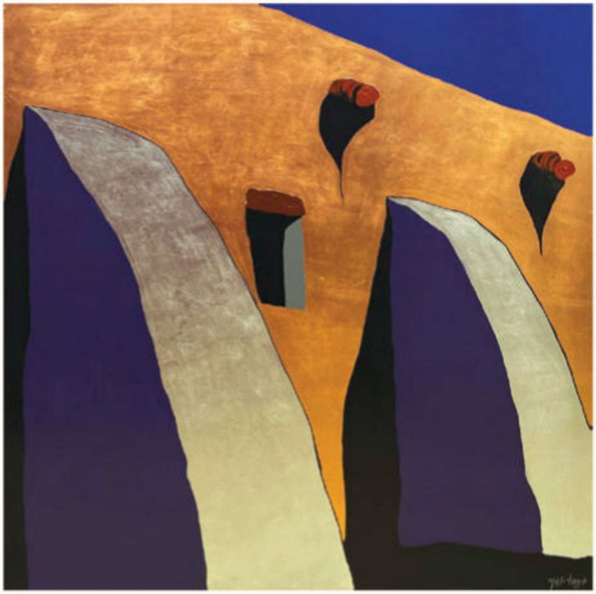

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1
Manitou Galleries,
Santa Maria Bell Tower, acrylic and gold leaf on panel, 12 x 12", by Alvin Gill-Tapia.

2
Manitou Galleries,
Enchanting Taos, gold and copper leaf with acrylic on Belgian linen, 48 x 60", by Alvin Gill-Tapia.

3
Manitou Galleries,
San Ildefonso Evening, copper and silver leaf with acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36", by Alvin Gill-Tapia.

MANITOU GALLERIES

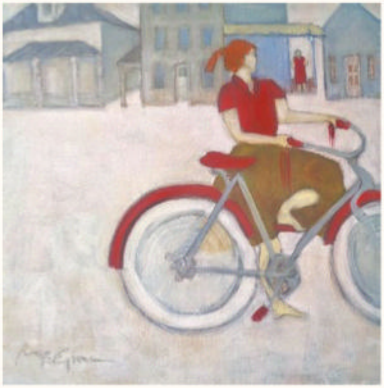
123 W. Palace Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501, (505) 986-0440
www.manitougalleries.com

For over 15 years, Manitou Galleries has proudly showcased the evocative work of Alvin Gill-Tapia, a Santa Fe-based artist whose paintings embody a reverent celebration of New Mexico's sacred architecture. His art brings a contemporary edge to the ancient adobe structures that have long defined the Southwestern landscape.

Gill-Tapia's work is an homage to hallowed places—simplified abstractions of churches, mission buildings and community spaces that transcend their original purpose, becoming symbols of connection and endurance. His bold use of color and precise geometry bring a modern vibrancy to these historical forms, reflecting the intensity and spirit of New Mexico's landscape while preserving the tranquil rhythm of Santa Fe life.

Grounding his art in a lineage of masterful training, Gill-Tapia's career was shaped by his years under Belgian weaver Maud Henon and further refined through his studies at esteemed New York institutions. Yet, it was his return to New Mexico and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains that cradle his family's history, which truly infused his work with its soulful essence.

At Manitou, Gill-Tapia's art resonates profoundly with audiences seeking a connection to the enduring beauty and history of the Southwest. His ability to distill the essence of architectural elegance into contemporary, color-driven compositions ensures Manitou remains a home for timeless storytelling.



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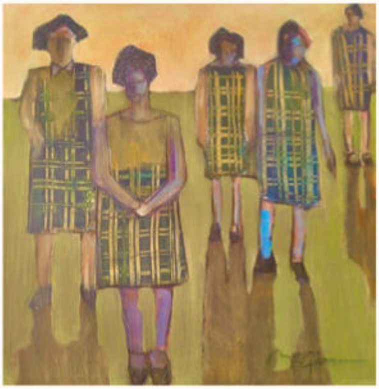

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Peggy McGivern, *Red Schwinn*, acrylic, 20x 20"

2
Peggy McGivern, *School Uniforms*, 16 x 16"

3
Peggy McGivern, *Nightingales*, oil, 24 x 36"

PEGGY MCGIVERN

www.peggymcgivern.com

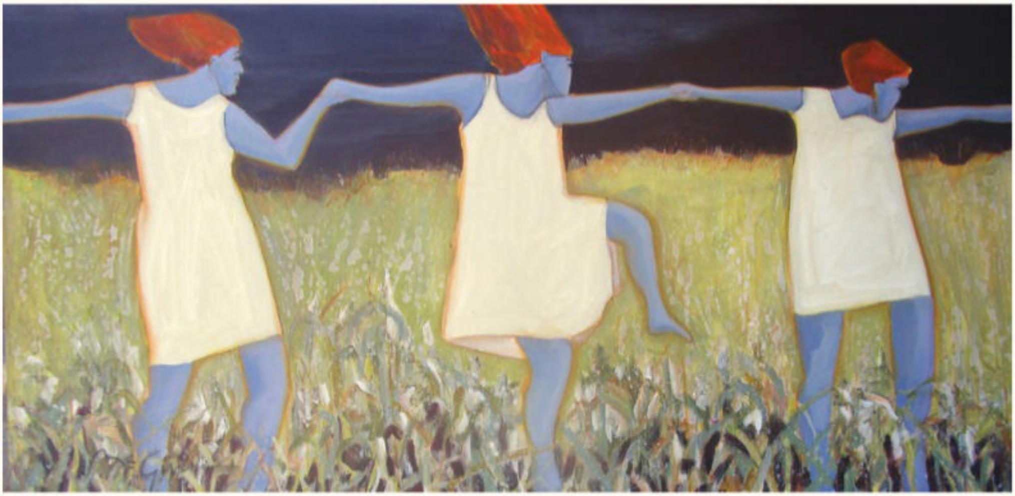
A wavy line connects all of Peggy McGivern's work, from her 1980s watercolors to the three-dimensional pieces she made in the '90s. By 2000, McGivern was established in well-known galleries across the Southwest. Always refining her craft, she makes vibrant, unexpected turns, visibly inhabiting simultaneously simple and complex shapes, figures and textures.

McGivern works in a color palette reminiscent of the 1940s. In rich-toned colors of burnt orange and rusty red, held together with shadows of warm plum and soft charcoal, she depicts the people and places she has encountered in her travels around the world. But she abstracts her narrative using mixed media of all kinds to create texture and depth.

McGivern begins with an idea that suggests a narrative or story. "From there the possibilities are endless," she says. "The piece continually evolves along the way." She first uses the blind contour method to draw out the idea, not looking at the canvas as she sketches. "Then I simplify the shapes and refine the composition, adding a layer of color which is often [contrary] to reality," however, she adds, "there's always a glimmer of truth in my work."

McGivern is honored to be included in the group exhibition *Go Figure: Figurative Women Painters*, on view April 25 through August 22 in Santa Fe at the New Mexico State Capitol's East Rotunda Gallery.

McGivern is represented by Giacobbe-Fritz Fine Art in Santa Fe; Jones Walker of Taos in Taos, New Mexico; Saks Galleries Cherry Creek in Denver, Colorado; and Wilde Meyer Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona.



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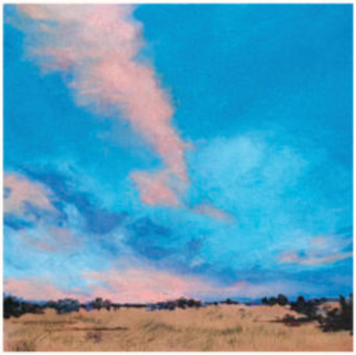
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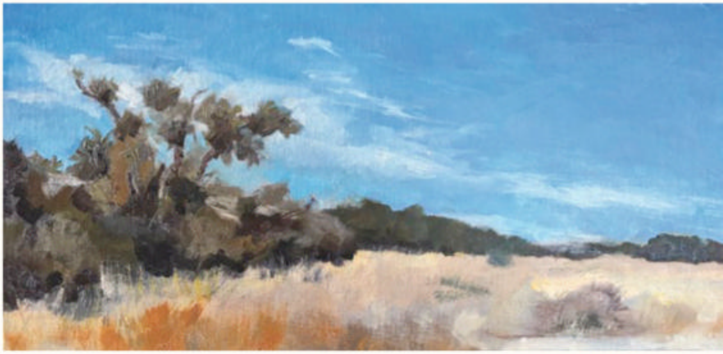
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CYNTHIA INSON

www.cynthiainsonart.com

"The best thing about being an artist is the journey of learning, analysis, decision making and discovery that I so enjoy as I create," says Santa Fe artist Cynthia Inson. "All these things truly fuel and run my engine. Painting is much like writing to me. Instead of words, I am using paint, color, brushstroke, line, and form to develop the story and create an impression of mood, light, distance and three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional surface and space."

Inson's goal as an artist is to captivate the viewer, to convince them to feel that sense of awe and joy that she felt seeing the sky that she painted or the mountains, roses, water or whatever her subject matter. She aims to stop viewers in their tracks and for them to respond and enjoy the impression the painting evokes.

"The added challenge," she shares, "is also to create paintings that continue to draw the viewer in, to visually wander, to see parts or the whole of the painting differently over time. This worthy challenge also continues to fuel my growth as an artist."

Inson is represented by Nedra Matteucci Galleries in Santa Fe.

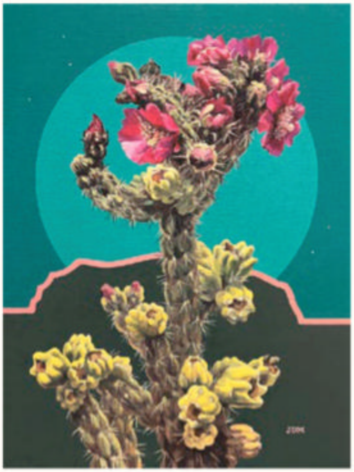
JOHN MEISTER

(505) 235-3213
john@meistergraphics.com
www.johnmeisterart.com
johnmeisterart

John Meister is known for featuring light and color in his paintings of the unique Southwestern natural world. His recent series places the subject in front of a colorful graphic backdrop "like a Vaudeville actor on stage," he describes, bringing it forward for the viewer to consider and appreciate.

"The term 'magical realism' had to be created for New Mexico," says Meister. "Living here, I appreciate the aesthetic of life in all its forms, and I gravitate toward intimate views of nature and the structure of things. Life must do a little something extra to thrive here, and sometimes it displays great beauty in the process. I strive to capture that."

Meister splits his art production between his studio and painting in open air, considering the New Mexico outdoors his perfect "classroom." He is represented by Legacy Gallery, with locations in Scottsdale, Arizona, and Santa Fe, and Manitou Galleries in Santa Fe.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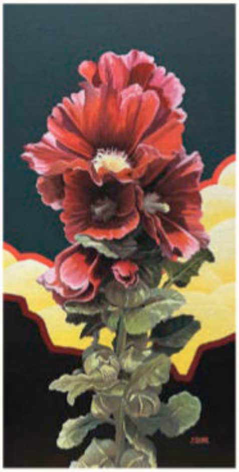
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Cynthia Inson, *Cold Start*, oil, 12 x12"

2
Cynthia Inson, *Quiet is in the Air*, oil, 12 x 24"

3
John Meister, *Cholla Sensation*, oil, 24 x 18"

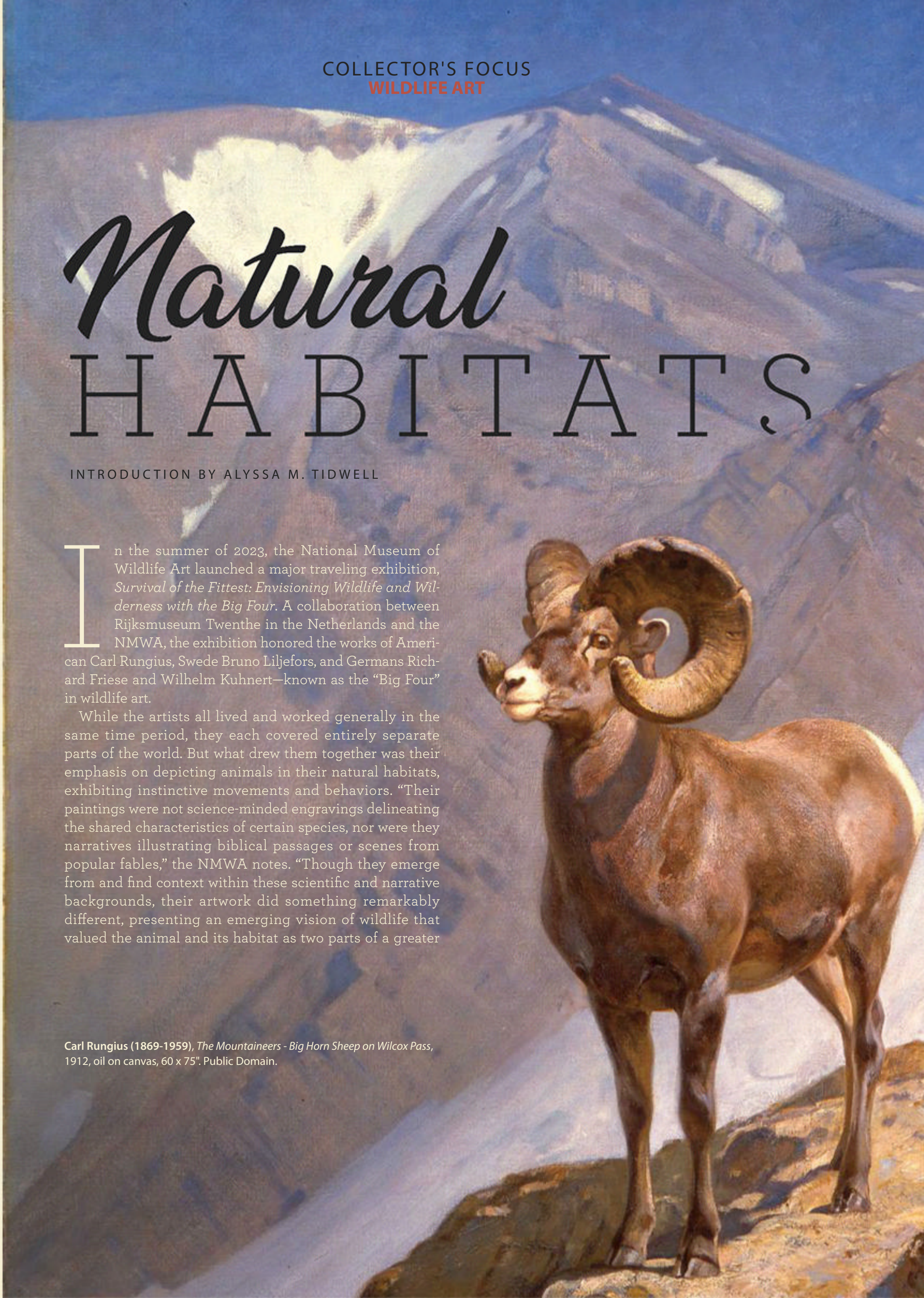
4
John Meister, *In the Mood*, oil, 24 x 12"

Natural HABITATS

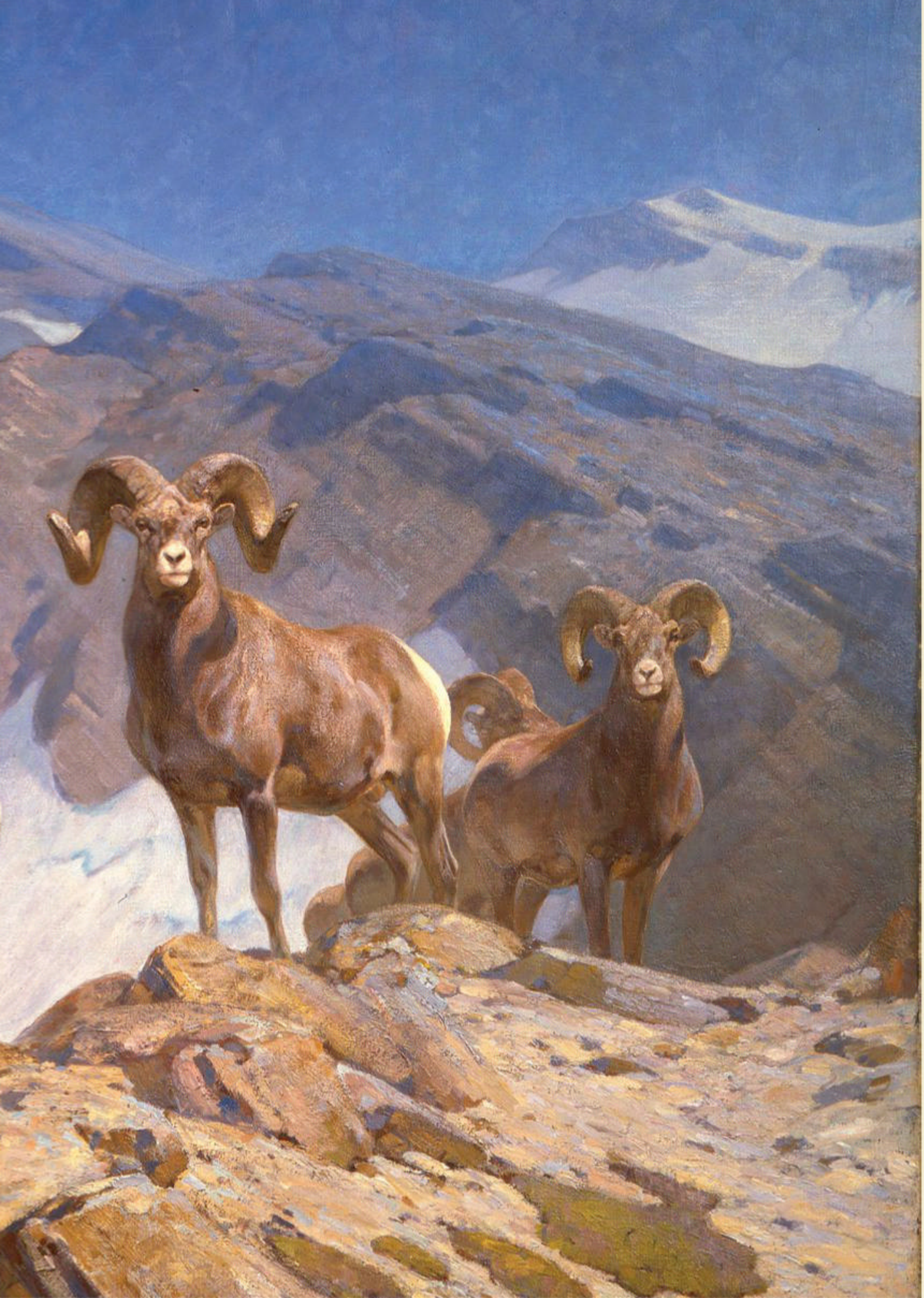
INTRODUCTION BY ALYSSA M. TIDWELL

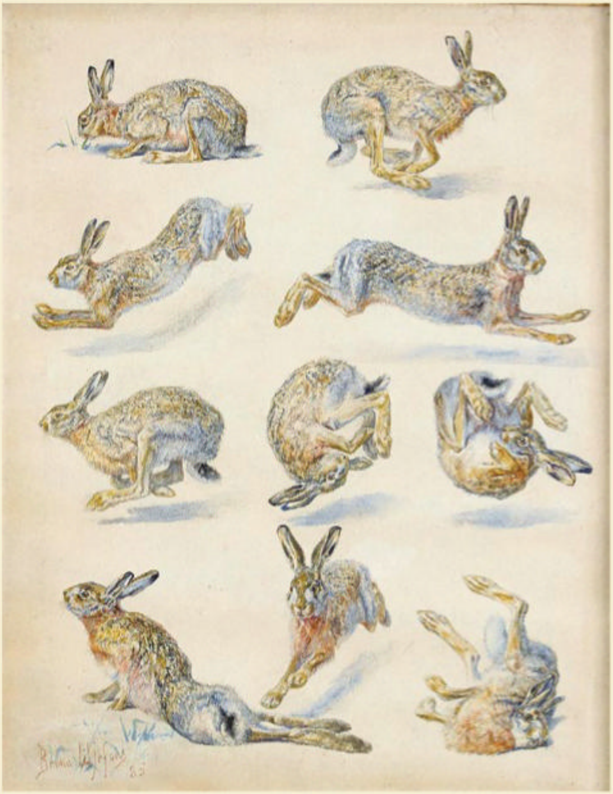
In the summer of 2023, the National Museum of Wildlife Art launched a major traveling exhibition, *Survival of the Fittest: Envisioning Wildlife and Wilderness with the Big Four*. A collaboration between Rijksmuseum Twenthe in the Netherlands and the NMWA, the exhibition honored the works of American Carl Rungius, Swede Bruno Liljefors, and Germans Richard Friese and Wilhelm Kuhnert—known as the "Big Four" in wildlife art.

While the artists all lived and worked generally in the same time period, they each covered entirely separate parts of the world. But what drew them together was their emphasis on depicting animals in their natural habitats, exhibiting instinctive movements and behaviors. "Their paintings were not science-minded engravings delineating the shared characteristics of certain species, nor were they narratives illustrating biblical passages or scenes from popular fables," the NMWA notes. "Though they emerge from and find context within these scientific and narrative backgrounds, their artwork did something remarkably different, presenting an emerging vision of wildlife that valued the animal and its habitat as two parts of a greater



Carl Rungius (1869-1959), *The Mountaineers - Big Horn Sheep on Wilcox Pass*, 1912, oil on canvas, 60 x 75". Public Domain.





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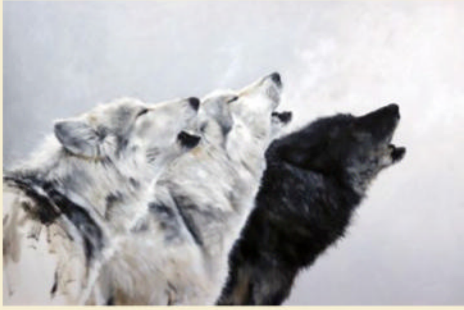

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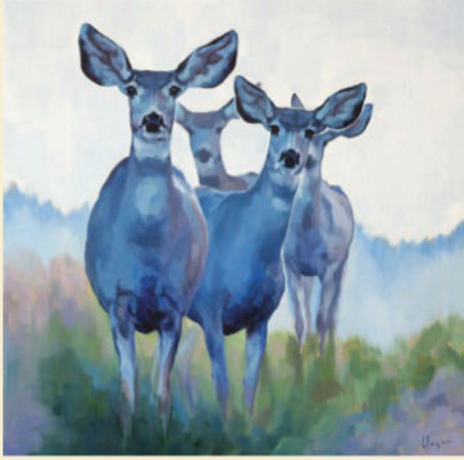

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2. Bruno Liljefors (1860-1939), *Hare studies*, 1885, 12½ x 9.6". Public Domain. **3. Gallery Wild**, *Winter Rhapsody*, oil on canvas panel, 40 x 60", by Doyle Hostetler. **4. Gallery Wild**, *Indigo Girls*, oil on linen, 36 x 36", by Amber Blazina.

whole, inseparable and interdependent elements of the wild."

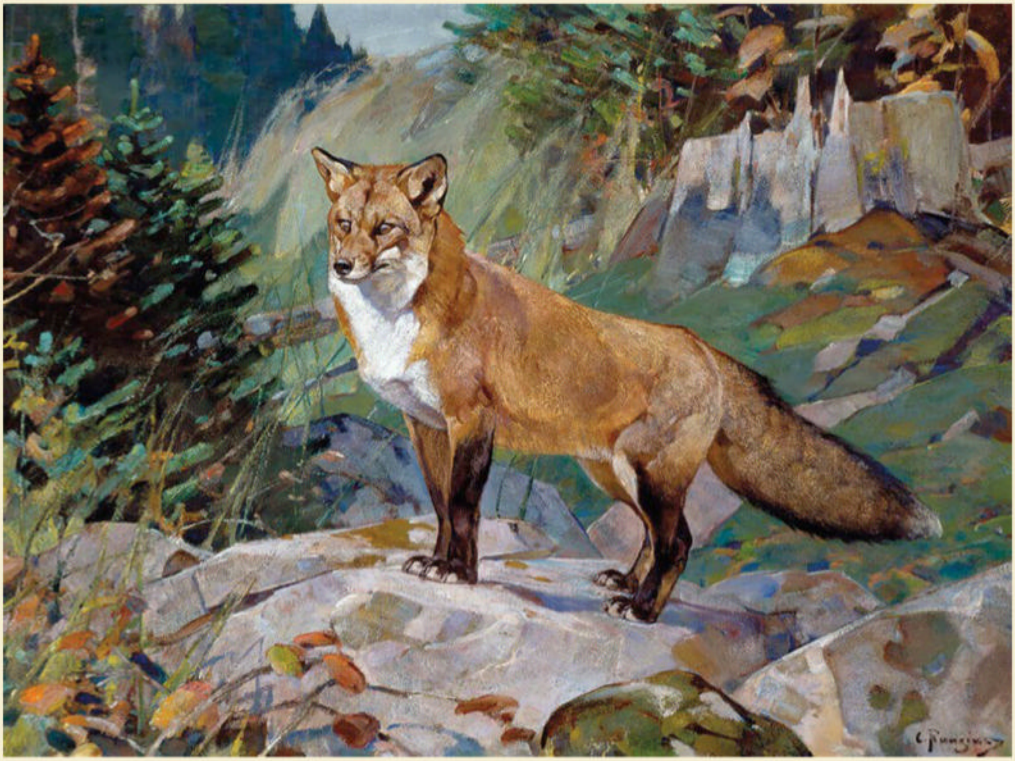
"The work of these four artists established a vision of wildlife and wilderness that remains with us today and had a tremendous influence on wildlife artists of the 20th century," says NMWA curator Adam Duncan Harris.

This vision of wildlife art that deeply values the animals themselves, as well as their interconnected ecosystems, permeates in the culture of wildlife art today. Most animal artists are also conservationists and naturalists, getting out in the field to observe their subjects directly from life. Understanding the animal and its unique behaviors is just as crucial as accurately capturing its likeness on canvas, paper or panel.

The non-profit Artists for Conservation represents nearly 500 of the world's top nature and wildlife artists from over 30 countries, each of whom are committed to conservation. The organization hosts online and in-person shows throughout the year, including the annual *Artists for Conservation Festival* in Vancouver, British Columbia. A genuine love of animals radiates through the artworks of wildlife painters both past and present.

Continue moving through the pages of this collector's focus to learn about some of the most respected galleries and artists specializing in nature and wildlife art today.

At **Gallery Wild**, wildlife art is more than representation—it's a powerful connection between artist, subject and place. Founded by artists deeply rooted in the landscapes they depict, the gallery curates work that blends artistic excellence with environmental reverence. Featured artists like Amber Blazina, Doyle Hostetler and Patricia A. Griffin embody this ethos, each bringing a distinct perspective to the genre. Their paintings go beyond realism, capturing the emotion, movement and spirit of the wild through expressive brushwork and a contemporary lens. This art invites viewers to pause, reflect and reconnect with the natural world—serving as both



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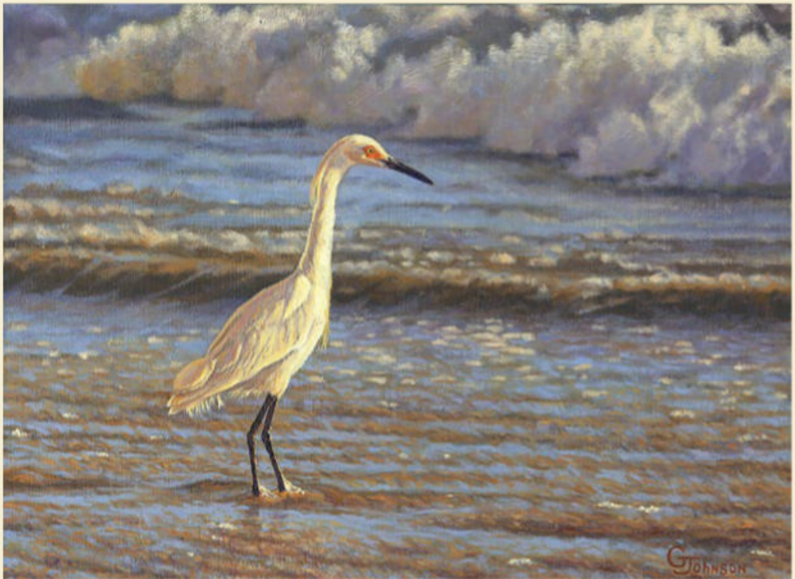

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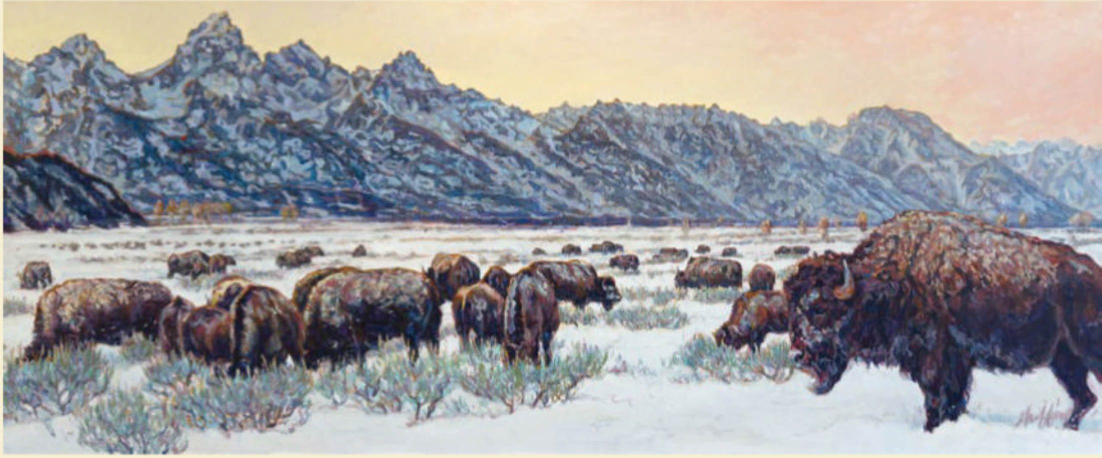
5. Carl Rungius (1869-1959), *Red Fox*, 1933, oil on canvas, 30 x 40". Jackson Hole Preserve, Museum of Wildlife Art. © Estate of Carl Rungius. **6. Gary Johnson**, *Surf Fisherman*, oil, 9 x 12"



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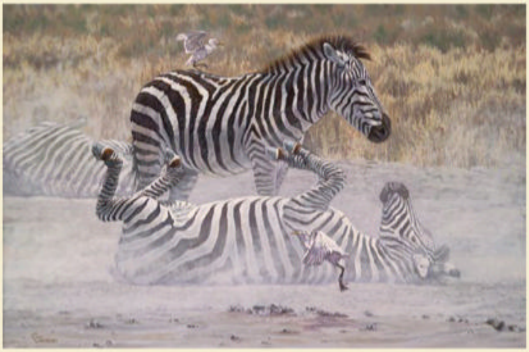

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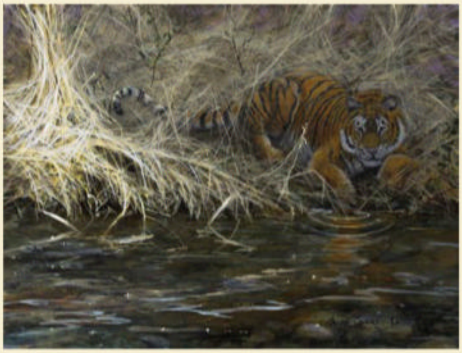

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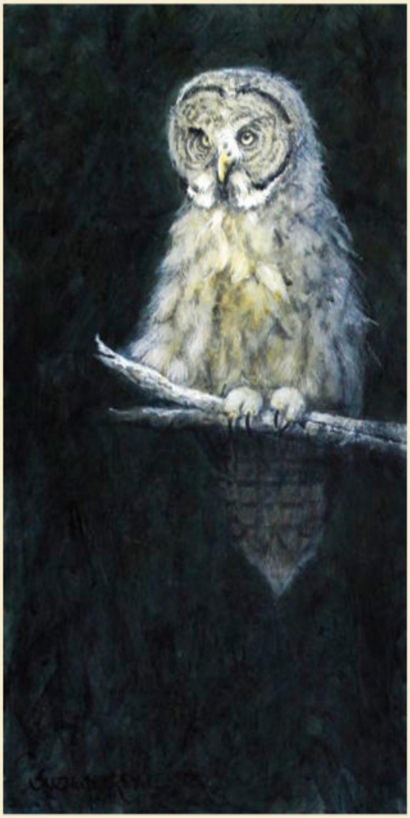
7. Gallery Wild, *-4º*, oil on linen, 30 x 72", by Patricia A. Griffin. **8. Gary Johnson**, *Yin and Yang*, oil, 24 x 36" **9. Suzie Seerey-Lester**, *Testing the Water*, acrylic, 12 x 16" **10. Suzie Seerey-Lester**, *Focused*, acrylic, 12 x 6" **11. Tamara Nelson**, *Faith*, pastel on Pastelmat, 26½ x 19" **12. Suzie Seerey-Lester**, *Ghost Train*, acrylic, 8 x 15"

celebration and call to conservation. For collectors, the most meaningful acquisitions come from a place of resonance. "Seek artwork that moves you, tells a story and reveals the artist's personal bond with their subject," advises the gallery." "Authenticity and intention are what make wildlife art not only collectible, but enduringly powerful in any collection."

Primarily working in oil on linen and mixed media on handmade paper, the inspiration for **Gary Johnson**'s art comes from nature as well as the artist's worldly travels. All three of Johnson's paintings shown here are multiple award winners. His oil *Yin and Yang* was created during a trip to East Africa observing animals in the wild. "It's very different to see animals in their natural habitat rather than a zoo. I like to have action in my composition and this one has plenty. The zebras flipping on their backs to thoroughly cover themselves in this fine dust and the cattle egrets who accompany the zebras reacting to their motion," he says. "*Head of The Herd*, a portrait of a sable antelope, is one of my unique mixed media paintings on handmade mulberry paper. I came up with this technique about 30 years ago. No one else uses this same technique of painting and framing. After hours of experimenting with different mediums on handmade papers, I landed on using watercolor, gouache and pastel pencil as my process. Recently, I have been adding gold and black mica bits around the edges of the paper to create and extra dimension to the deckled torn edges of the paper. I frame each piece in a shadow box format which adds extra depth to the image. My technique gives a modern look to a traditional image," he explains.

Suzie Seerey-Lester is an award-winning wildlife artist known for her



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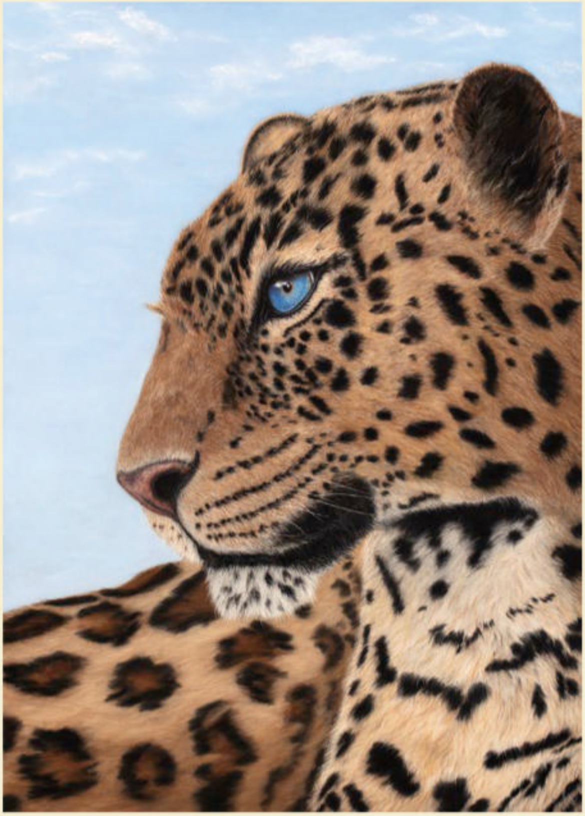

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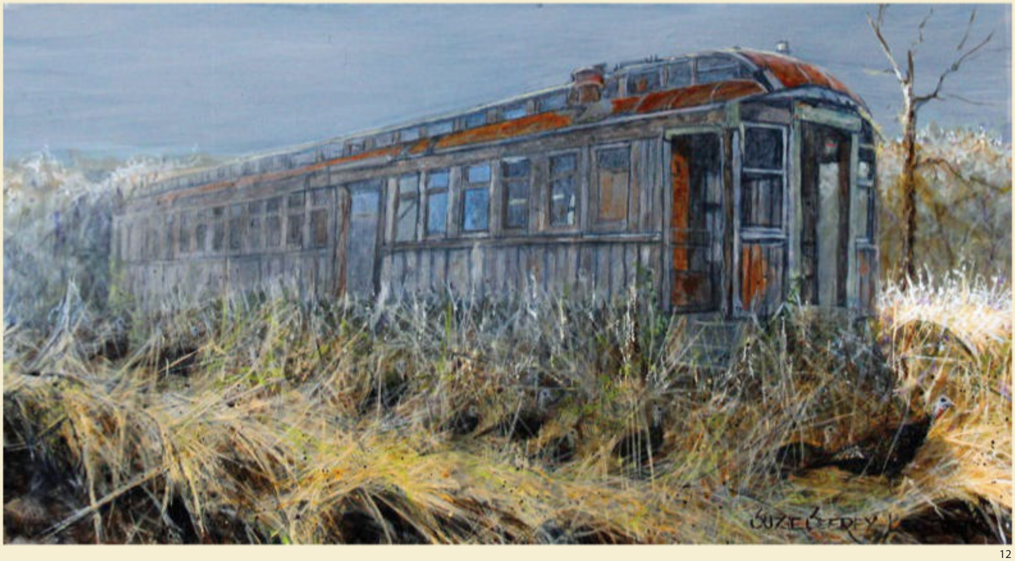

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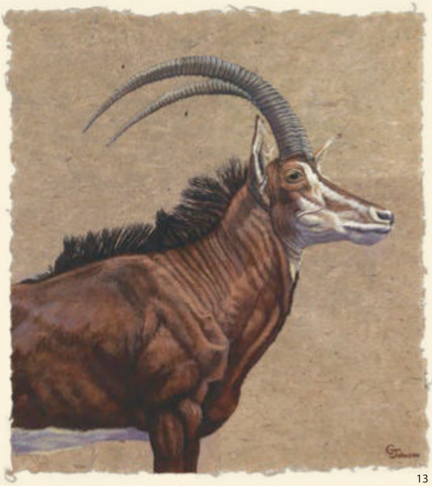

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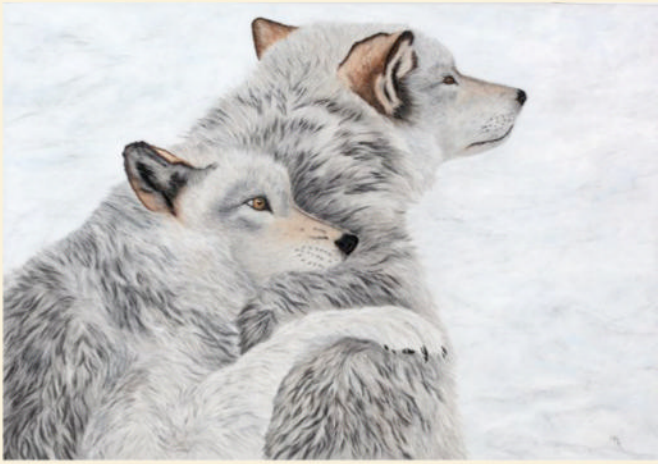

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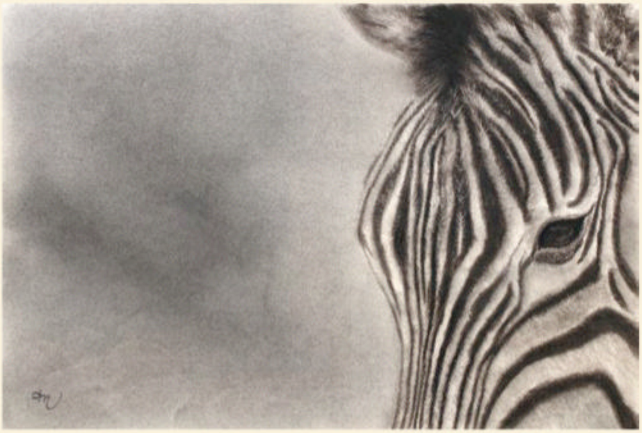

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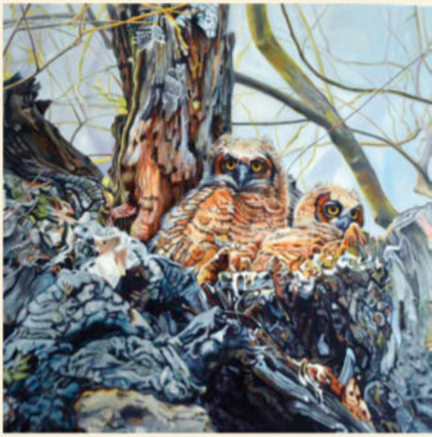

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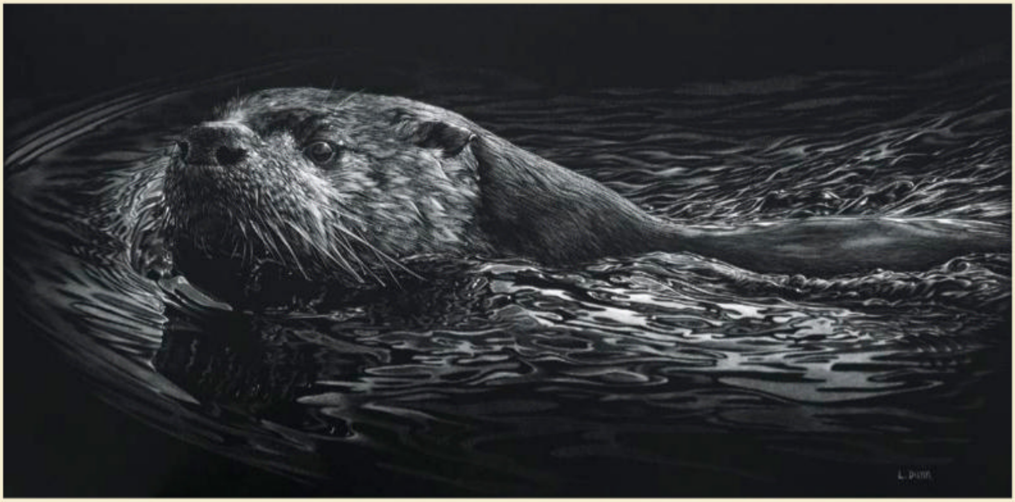
13. Gary Johnson, *Head of the Herd*, mixed media on mulberry paper, 20 x 22" **14. Tamara Nelson**, *Endless Love*, pastel on Pastelmat board, 26½ x 38" **15. Tamara Nelson**, *Zorro*, charcoal on Arches hot-pressed watercolor paper, 12 x 18" **16. Waterfowl Festival**, *Great Horned Owls at Gibbons Park*, oil, 24 x 24", by Kelly McNeil.

barns, birds and large cats. Her mysterious backgrounds inspire collectors to discover the hidden animals within them. Recently, Seerey-Lester received the Celebrating the Natural World Award from the organization American Women Artists. She is also the recipient of the Rose Award from the Susan K. Black Foundation. The artist has traveled all over the world to capture her incredible subjects, only painting animals she's seen in the wild with her own eyes.

The artwork of **Tamara Nelson** is a celebration of the natural world. "As the owner of my own gallery in Laguna Beach, California, I am privileged to have the forum to share my love of nature and wildlife," she says. "I seek to foster a deeper connection between people and the natural world. I strive to capture their beauty and fragility." Working in pastel, charcoal, acrylic and oil, Nelson explores the intricate textures, colors and movement of wildlife to bring attention to the urgent need for environmental conservation and the protection of endangered animals and ecosystems. "Each brushstroke and medium I use is an expression of my deep connection to the creatures, plants and waters that sustain life on this planet," says Nelson. "Through my art, I hope to inspire reflection and a sense of urgency about protecting the natural world."

Since its founding in 1971 by a group



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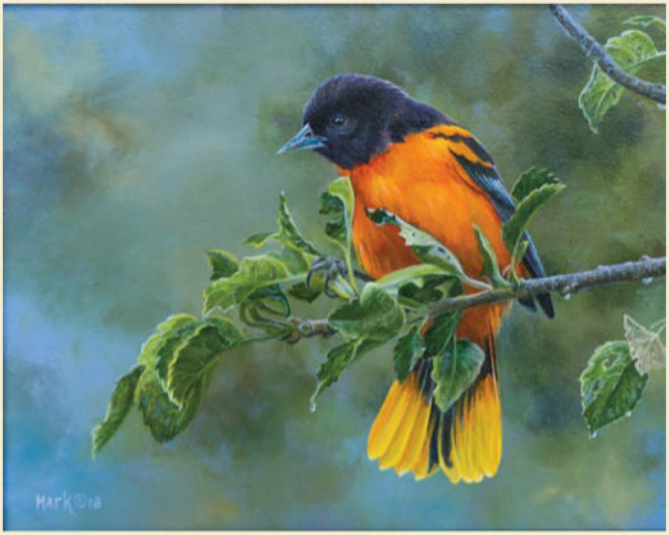

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17. Waterfowl Festival, *Go With the Flow*, engraving on clayboard 10 x 20", by Lori Dunn. **18. Waterfowl Festival**, *Spring Visitor Baltimore Oriole*, acrylic, 11 x 14", by Laura Mark Finberg.

of dedicated volunteers, the ***Waterfowl Festival*** in Easton, Maryland, has celebrated the beauty of wildlife and the artistic talents that bring nature to life. The event's unwavering commitment to artists and wildlife art has made this event a cherished tradition, drawing thousands of collectors, enthusiasts and conservationists alike to the annual event. One of the finest of its kind in the nation, the event sells hundreds of thousands of dollars of art in just three days. Each year, Easton's historic downtown streetscape is transformed into an incredible art gallery with multiple venues, ensuring that the tradition of wildlife art remains strong. Through these efforts, the festival not only supports the artistic community but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the natural world. This year's festival will take place November 14 to 16. ●

FEATURED Artists & Galleries

GALLERY WILD
Jackson Hole, WY; Santa Fe, NM
(307) 203-2322
info@gallerywild.com
www.gallerywild.com

GARY JOHNSON
(760) 402-9986
www.garyjohnson.com

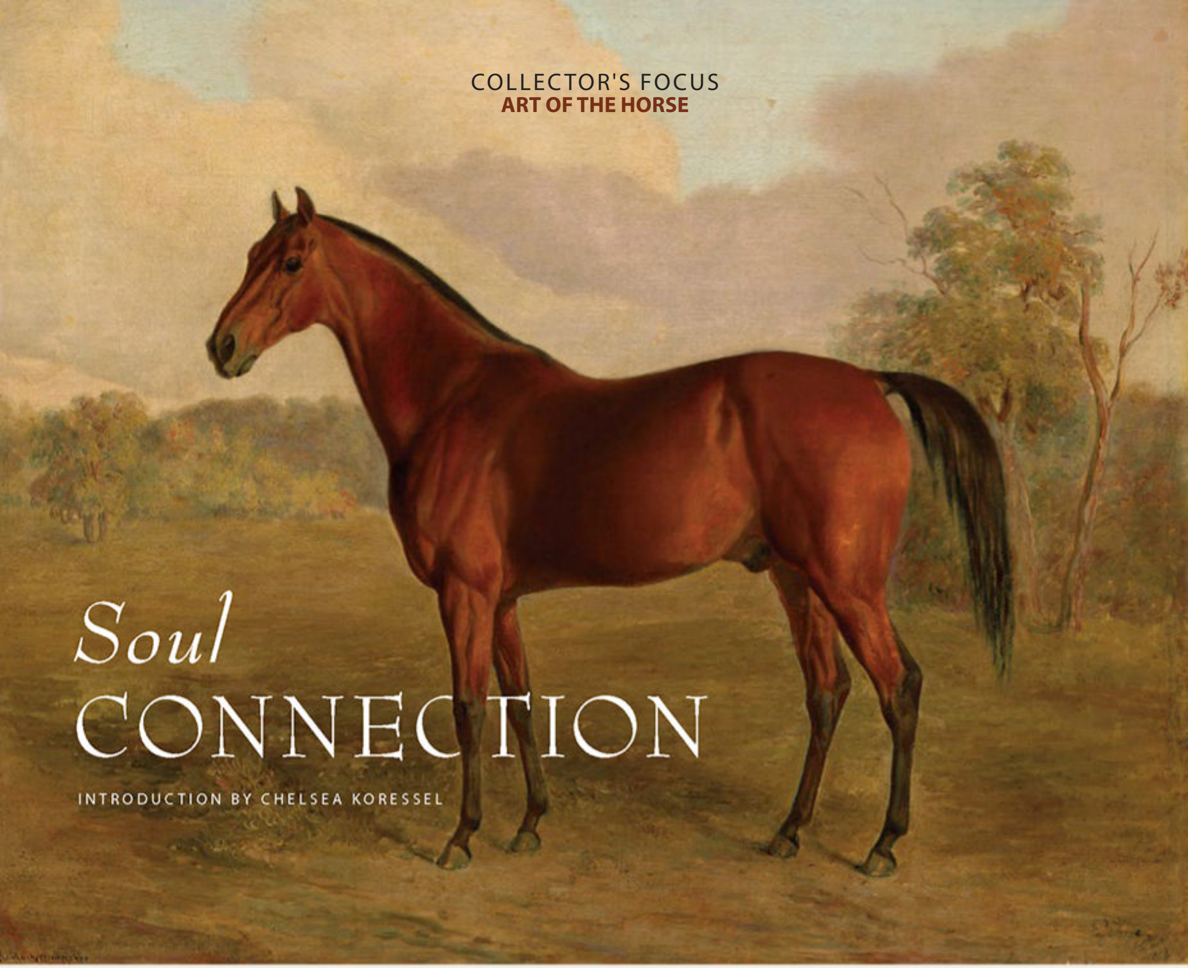
SUZIE SEEREY-LESTER
(941) 223-0963
seereylester@msn.com
www.seerey-lester.com
www.seerey-lester-art.com

TAMARA NELSON
(949) 510-6602
tamara@tamaranelsonart.com
www.tamaranelsonart.com

WATERFOWL FESTIVAL
Easton, MD
(410) 822-4567
facts@waterfowlfestival.org
www.waterfowlfestival.org

Soul CONNECTION

INTRODUCTION BY CHELSEA KORESSEL



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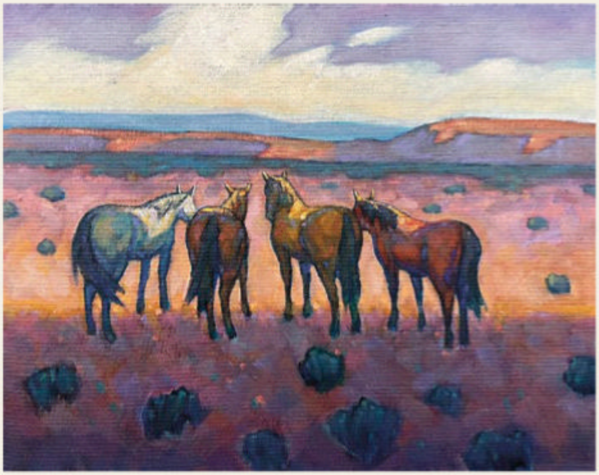
For many reasons, people are drawn to the mysticism embodied by horses—an animal that also exudes an elegant nature. These large mammals have not only accompanied people through battle, hunting trips, travel and competitive races, among other activities, but they've served as soulful companions as well. It's all too obvious that artists throughout centuries, would also be compelled to depict "the horse" in all their brilliant glory.

For example, artist **Edward Troye** (1808-1874), was renowned for depicting thoroughbreds, creating a template for future artists and paving the way for the sporting genre. "Following his marriage to Miss Cornelia Ann Van de Graaff in 1839, Troye settled in her home state of Kentucky," note representatives at the Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame. "Flourishing amidst the state's rich horse-breeding culture, Troye devoted a majority of his time to horse portraiture. Painting in the pre-photography era, [the artist] provided the trotting and thoroughbred communities with expertly crafted portraits. Without them the world might not have had a visual record of trotting horses that include Abdallah, Belmont, Dexter, Dictator and Mambrino Pilot, and thoroughbreds Lexington, Glencoe and American Eclipse. Troye is believed to have painted more than 350 horses, mainly racehorses from across the Southern states, during his career."

In his painting *Kentucky Woodpecker*, 1834, found in the collection of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, we see a gorgeous example of Troye's skill at play. The accuracy and detail found in the horse's profile, set against a background of foliage and sky, is truly a sight to behold.

In more contemporary works, such as *Turned Out* by Howard Post, we see less focus on accuracy in the animal but a colorful example of horses among a sweeping Western landscape. Part of the show *Paintbrush Cowboys* at Medicine Man Gallery this past January, the pieces show the animal as the cowboy's companion on the range or as passive subjects in pens.

While Post is now retired from rodeo riding and says, "I don't have horses anymore and I quit competing a couple years ago...But I still admire horses and paint them frequently." The artist is also known for depicting his horse subjects in high, angled perspectives—scenes that involve horses in their pens, for example,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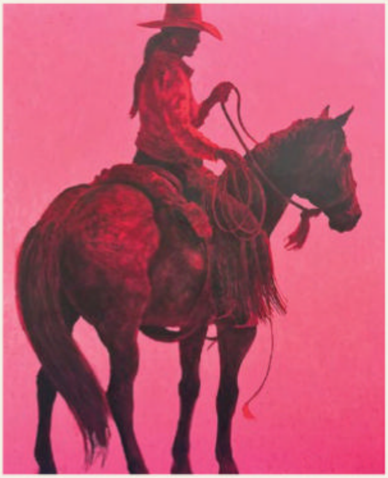
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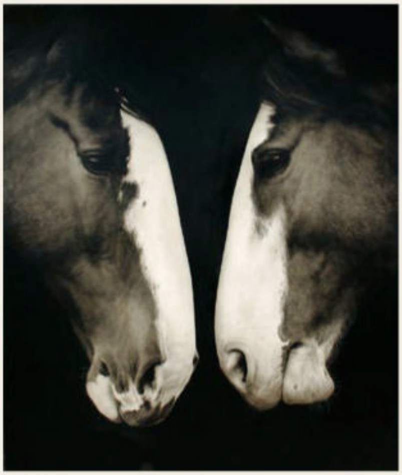
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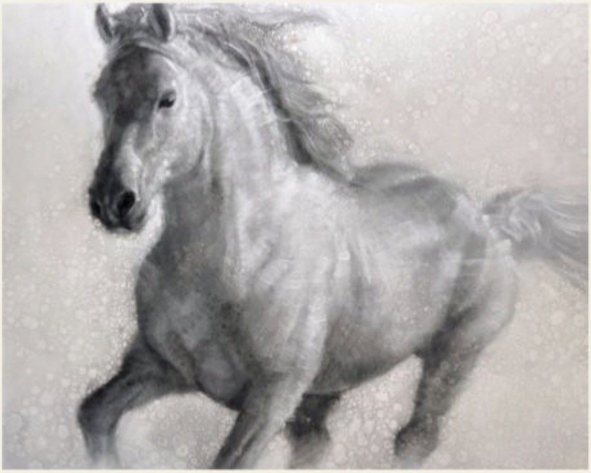
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1. The Clark, *Kentucky Woodpecker*, 1834, oil on canvas. Clark Art Institute, 1955.878., by Edward Troye (1808-1874). **2. Medicine Man Gallery**, *Turned Out*, oil, 11 x 14", by Howard Post. **3. Altamira Fine Art**, *Persephone*, mixed media on canvas, 72 x 60", by Duke Beardsley. **4. Altamira Fine Art**, *A Love Story*, oil on canvas, 72 x 60", by Kenneth Peloke. **5. Altamira Fine Art**, *Galloping Mist*, oil on canvas, 48 x 60", by David Frederick Riley.

creating a unique feel and design.

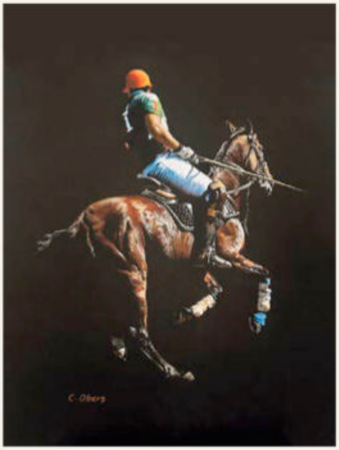
Whether a horse artwork—painting or sculpture—is depicted in high realism or through abstracted elements, it remains clear that there's "something" about the animal that touches the human soul. It may be ineffable and elusive, but the connection is there, so much so that artists far and wide dedicate their entire careers trying to communicate the many sentiments surrounding our relationship with "the horse."

Continue reading the remainder of this section dedicated to the art of the horse for more insights from artists and galleries.

Altamira Fine Art specializes in the exhibition and sale of Western Contemporary artwork, offering an active exhibition schedule year-round between two gallery locations in Jackson, Wyoming, and Scottsdale, Arizona. "While horse art is prevalent in both the Scottsdale and Jackson Hole markets, it's a subject that truly transcends regionality," says the gallery. "The spirit, power and freedom of the horse has widespread appeal, and the variety of styles with which our artists portray the subject are vast. From a Pop Art sensibility to monochromatic realism, the beauty of the horse prevails."

Altamira represents horse imagery like *Persephone* by Duke Beardsley; *A love Story* by Kenneth Peloke; and *Galloping Mist* by David Frederick Riley.

Artist **Deborah R. Hill** finds inspiration in the depth of color and form in the natural world—rural vistas, shorelines, beach and marsh, while also painting still life in the studio. "I'm a professional artist with a passion for painting and depicting my surroundings in an abstract-realism style, finding familiarity, but giving the viewer a



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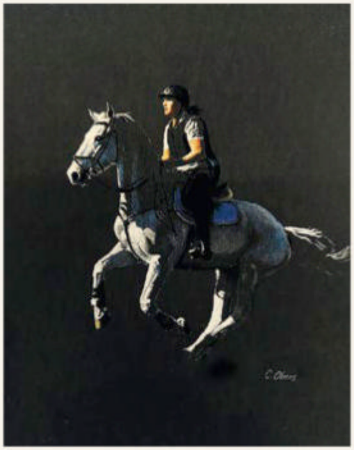

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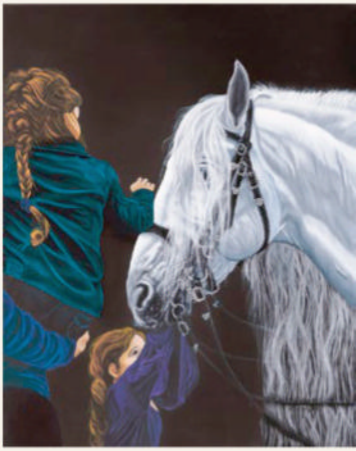

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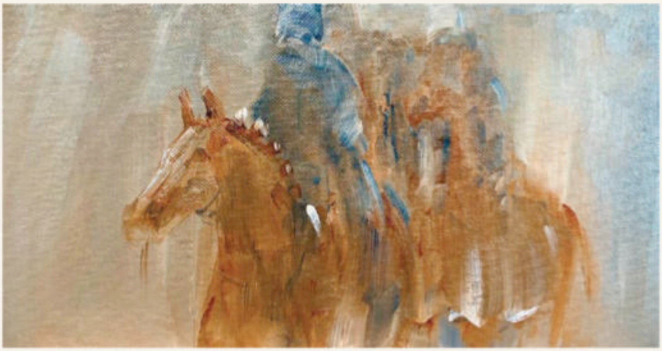

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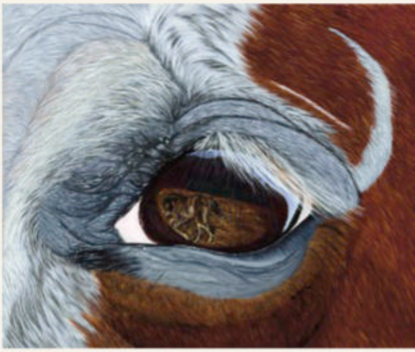

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new representation of a scene," says Hill. "In many of my landscape paintings there is a horse present, and very often I choose to depict the horse in a vibrant palette full of action as in *First Horse*. Other times, in a more realistic palette as in *The Parade*."

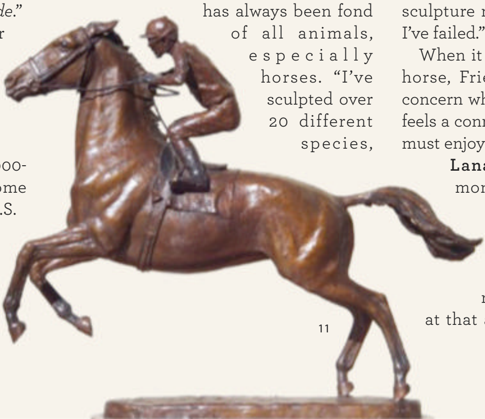
Hill utilizes the horse in many of her paintings as an homage. "The horse has provided us with the first means of mobility and has benefited mankind for centuries," she adds. "I am a big supporter of The Wild Refuge located in Colorado. The 30,000-acre refuge provides a protected home for the wild mustang horses in the U.S. I believe it is important to celebrate the horse but also protect them the best we can, and be a voice to the voiceless."

Find more of Hill's work at Spa Fine Art, Saratoga Springs, New York; Five 3 Gallery, Laguna California; and The Comma Fine Art, Orchard Park, New York.

Sculpture artist, **Kathleen Friedenberg**, grew up in England, and has always been fond of all animals, especially horses. "I've sculpted over 20 different species, including people," says the artist. "As a former veterinarian and medical illustrator, I'm particularly concerned about correct anatomy, and body language in relation to the specific situation. Above all, my sculpture must have life! If it isn't alive, I've failed."

When it comes to collecting art of the horse, Friedenberg says, "The crucial concern when buying artwork is that one feels a connection with the piece, that one must enjoy living with it."

Lana Tyler tries to capture a moment of emotion, action or a unique perspective in her work. "The girls reaching out to pet the horse in *If Wishes Were Horses* reminded me of how I was at that age whenever I was around a



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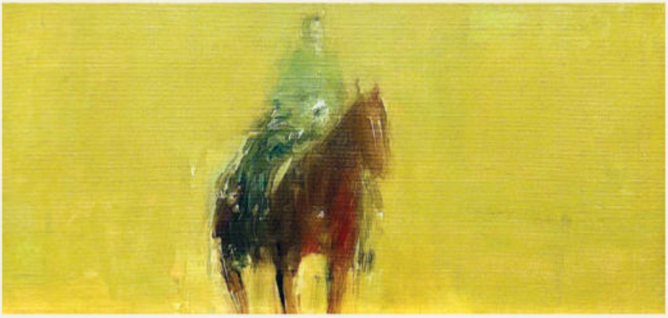

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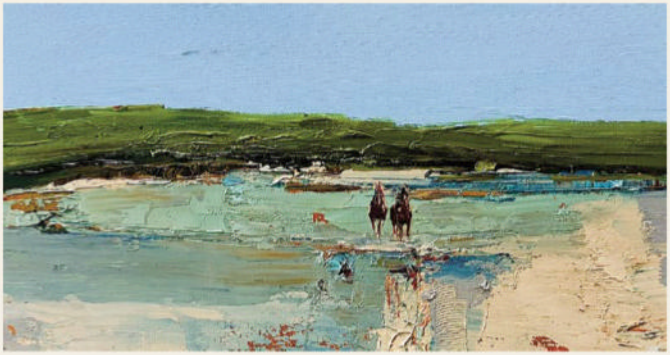

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6. Christine Obers, *Covering #4*, pastel, 16 x 12" **7. Christine Obers**, *Three, Two, One Jump!* (*Counting the Strides to the Jump*), pastel, 12 x 9" **8. Lana Tyler**, *If Wishes Were Horses*, oil on linen, 20 x 16" **9. Deborah R. Hill**, *The Parade*, oil, 6 x 13" **10. Lana Tyler**, *In a Mare's Eye*, oil on canvas, 20 x 24" **11. Kathleen Friedenberg**, *Flying Start*, bronze, 14½ x 12 x 4" **12. Deborah R. Hill**, *Horse and Rider*, oil, 12 x 24" **13. Deborah R. Hill**, *The Horse in the Landscape*, oil, 10 x 20"

horse," she says. "I wanted to capture that feeling of awe and love. By keeping the faces of the girls' obscure, I wanted others to be able to see themselves in them. *In a Mare's Eye* came from the perspective of what a mare might see when looking at her foal, reflected in her eye. My models were two half-sisters that I had bred." In other works, Tyler captured the power, beauty and drama of the horse.

To those who wish to collect equine art, Tyler recommends buying pieces that speak to you and touch you emotionally rather than following fads. Tyler is currently available for commissions.

"Horses fascinate me," says **Christine Obers**. "Powerful as they are, they can be very shy and timid. Gaining their trust requires communicating in a way the horse understands. The horse will set aside its natural fear and sense of survival to place its complete trust in a person. Over the years, I've created numerous portrait commissions of special horses, capturing their unique personality. I still enjoy portrait commissions but I'm also exploring art that speaks to the unique bond that people have with their horses—especially in equine sports. This synergy between human and animal is beautiful. The horse becomes an extension of our own body. For decades I rode and showed my horses in sports such as cross-country, show jumping and dressage. It's this feeling of unity and shared energy that I want to express in my work. By distilling everything down to the essential elements, the artwork has a sense of electricity, power and movement." ●

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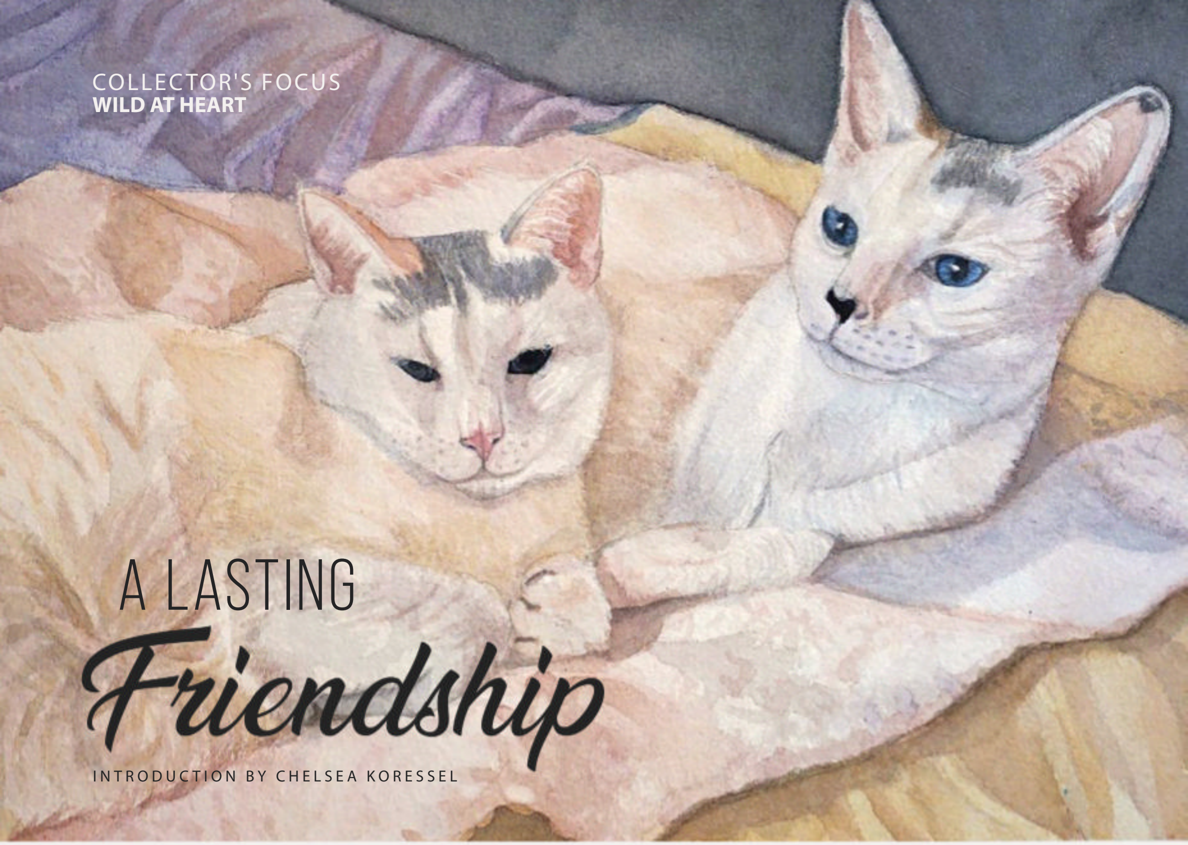


A LASTING Friendship

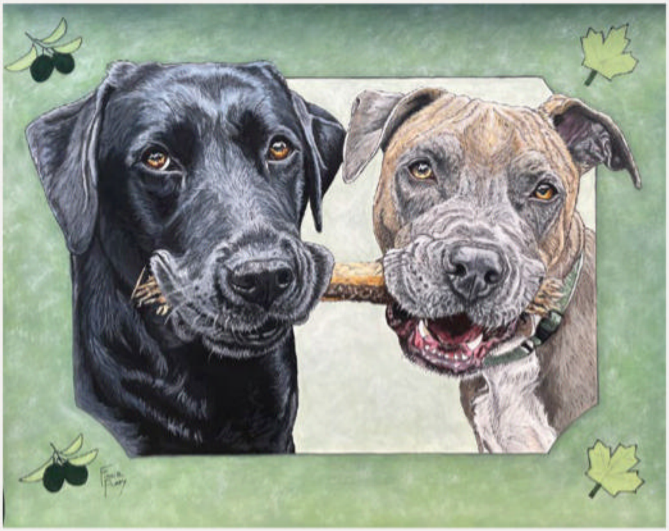
INTRODUCTION BY CHELSEA KORESSEL

1

History books have taught us many things. We know everything about battles won and lost, invention and innovation, and even the many nuances surrounding partnerships and friendships of important figures that have changed the course of history. Yet, one such important friendship and connection is largely missing from textbooks—our infatuation and love for pets.

Upon a deeper dive into the lives of people past, you will often find a devotion to dogs, cats and even birds. Mary, Queen of Scots, for example, was known for her large brood of animals beginning in childhood, such as "four big dogs and twenty-two little lap dogs, as well as falcons and pet birds," writes historian Antonia Fraser in *Mary Queen of Scots*, mentioned in a *Vanity Fair* article by Hadley Hall Meares.

"During the tedious, lonely years of her imprisonment in England, the exiled queen's pets took on a new importance, as companions and support animals," writes Meares. "She kept caged birds, including turtle doves and Barbary fowls,



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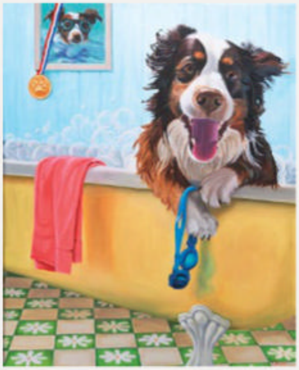

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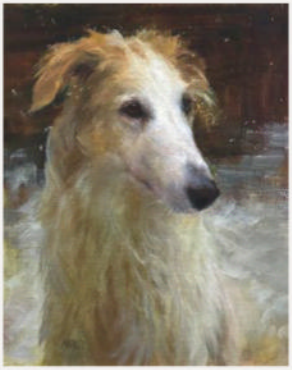

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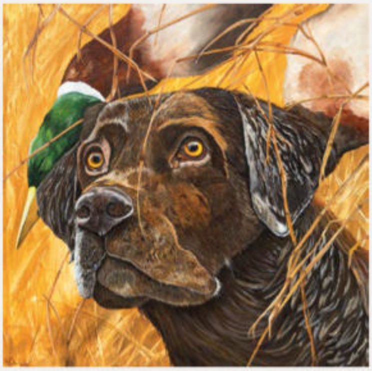

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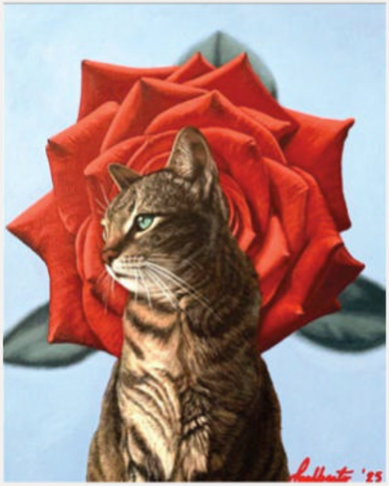

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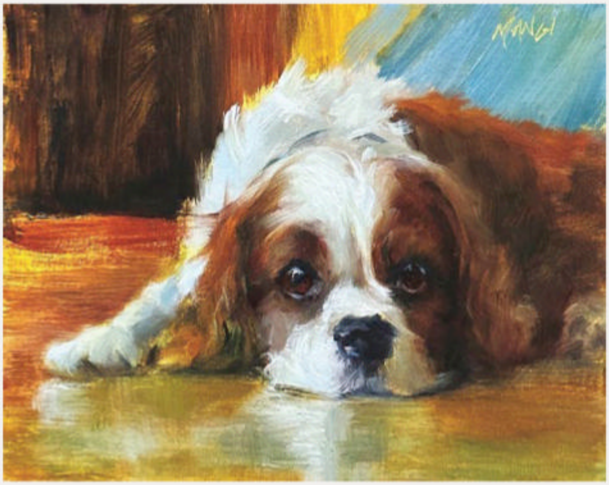

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1. 33 Contemporary, *Sisters,* watercolor on paper, 9 x 12", by Aki Kano. **2. Fiona Purdy**, *Maple and Olive*, ink and acrylic on watercolor paper, 11 x 14" **3. Carol Luz**, *#1 Dog Paddler*, oil on linen, 24 x 30" **4. Johanne Mangi**, *Emma in the Snow*, oil on linen, 14 x 11" **5. Jeanie Edwards**, *Blinded*, acrylic, 24 x 24" **6. Gualberto Del Toro Colberg**, *In Memoriam Lucy*, acrylic on canvas, 16 x 12" **7. Johanne Mangi**, *Waiting*, oil on linen, 8 x 10"

and doted on her small lap dogs. After her execution in 1587 in the cold Great Hall of Fotheringhay Castle, her executioners discovered that her most devoted friend had stayed with her until the very end.

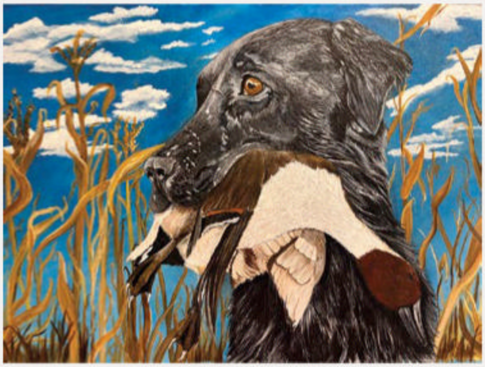
Fraser writes, "Her little lap dog, a Skye Terrier, who had managed to accompany her into the hall under her long skirts, where her servants had been turned away, had now crept out from beneath her petticoat, and in its distress had stationed itself piteously beneath the severed head and the shoulders of the body. Nor would it be coaxed away, but steadfastly and uncomprehendingly clung to the solitary thing it could find in the hall which still reminded it of its dead mistress."

Artists across time have been inspired to depict their pets, including Andy Warhol and his dachshund Archie; Pablo Picasso's dog Lump; and David Hockney's pups Stanley and Boodgie, just to name a few, all making it at one point into a painting or drawing.

Today, we see artists continuing to spread the love and adoration we have for our pets. Artist **Aki Kano**, president of the American Artists Professional League, and represented by 33 Contemporary on Artsy, discusses her watercolor *Sisters*, a depiction of her two cats, Nala and Angel: "[They] sshare a very deep and tender bond," says Kano. "I wanted to capture their affection and close relationship in this portrait. While they may look alike, Nala and Angel have distinct personalities, and I enjoyed capturing that in their different expressions."

The artist shares that painting animals and pets is one of her favorite subjects. "I love exploring their diverse textures, colors and personalities through watercolor. The medium's transparency allows me to delicately paint their details with subtlety and sensitivity."

Often times, artists will be commissioned to paint a specific pet, as is the case for **Fiona Purdy**. "When I speak to a client about their pet, I'm witness to joy and happiness," she says. "As I paint the earnest, trusting, beautiful faces of the creatures that are held so dear, I truly feel the depth of love between my clients and their special animals—and I share that love.



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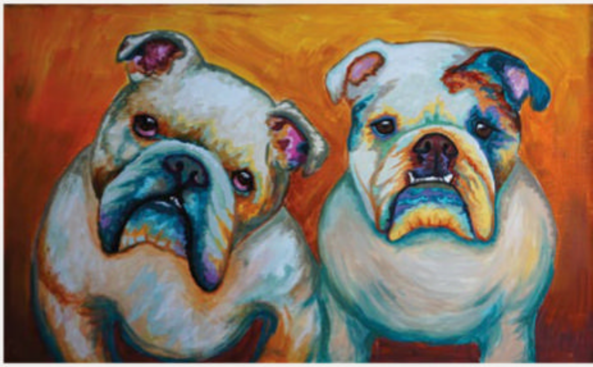

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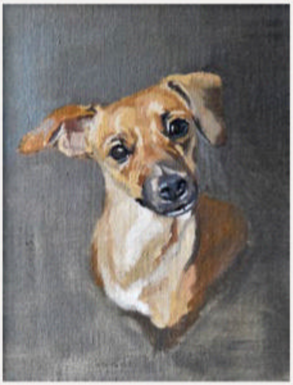

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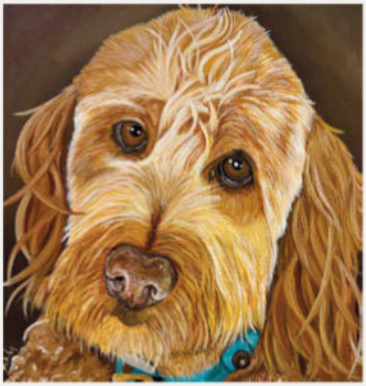

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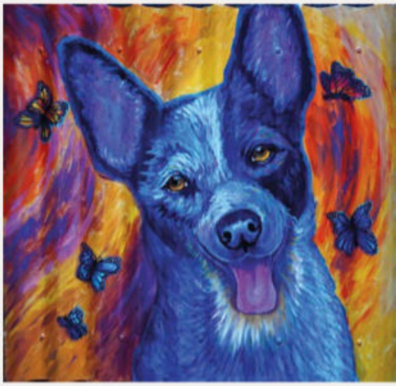

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8. Jeanie Edwards, *Blue Skies*, acrylic on board, 17 x 11″ **9. Meg Harper**, *Otis and Charlie*, paint on cabinet door, 18 x 24″ **10. Laura Hausler**, *Rocko*, oil on linen and birch panel, 12 x 9″ **11. Jeanie Edwards**, *Just a Wee Doodle*, acrylic, 12 x 12″ **12. Meg Harper**, *Heeling is Miraculous*, paint on reclaimed corrugated tin, 24 x 20″

I am touched by that love and my paintings become part of that love."

Purdy's piece *Maple and Olive*, captures the spirit of two dogs that are best friends. "[This piece] has one of my painted trademark borders, where the dogs appear to be moving out of it," she continues. "My clients who choose to have me paint a border, often ask for me to add something that has a significance to the client or the pet. They like it as long as no one knows the significance except them. It makes the portrait even more personal."

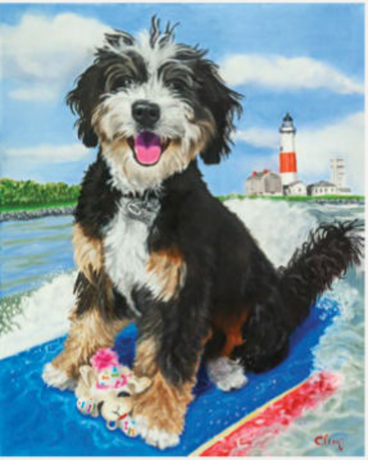
Continue reading to hear from more artists about the joys of creating pet-inspired artwork.

Carol Luz's inspiration for painting dogs doing human things comes from a deep love for both the animal and storytelling. "Every dog has a unique personality, and I enjoy bringing that to life in humorous and unexpected ways," she says. "Whether they're driving a boat, playing bingo or getting a mug shot, my dogs take on human roles while keeping their playful, lovable spirit. Seeing people smile and laugh at my art is the best reward—it reminds me why I create. Each painting tells a story, inviting viewers to imagine the world from a dog's quirky perspective. The joy and fun in my work reflect how dogs make our lives brighter.

When collecting pet art, Luz suggests choosing "artwork that makes you smile every time you see it—humorous dogs doing human things aren't just paintings, they're little moments of joy frozen in time. Find a piece that tells a story you love, because laughter and whimsy are always worth collecting."

For **Gualberto Del Toro Colberg**, the natural world has been the primary source of inspiration. "All plant and animal life, of which we are a part of, fuels my creative drive and provides me with an endless supply of color, light and shadow to marvel at and to put down on canvas," he shares. "I recreate landscapes and seascapes, animals and people, with my hands and via my mind, in hopes to capture the essence and feel of what I observe, contemplate and ultimately love. Time is fleeting yet I strive to capture it. Light is ever changing, and I try to honor its presence. Color is like flavor, so I attempt to savor it." Colberg also shares he's available for commissions.

"I paint all kinds of subject matter for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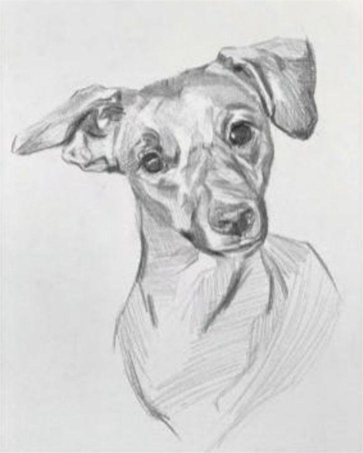
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13. **Carol Luz**, *Rufus Surfing*, oil on linen, 16 x 20". **14.** **Laura Hausler**, *Rocko*, graphite on Stonehenge oil paper, 12 x 9".

the challenge and to primarily to sharpen my skills," says artist **Johanne Mangi**. "My favorite subject by far has always been animals. I like to tell my clients that if I take on a commission, I will paint it with the same care I have while painting my own animal. It's important for me to understand my subject and the environment they live in. There are so many factors that go into capturing the spirit of a family pet. Awareness and sensitivity serve me well in this regard."

When collecting, Mangi feels that people want more than just a painting on the wall. "They want connection with the artist and a painting that is a reflection of their inner selves," she says.

Jeanie Edwards' love for animals started at a young age growing up on her parents' farm in Alabama. When she begins an animal portrait, she always paints the eyes first, quoting, "It's because my daddy always said that is where you look to see the soul of an animal." Her clients are continually impressed by her ability to capture the personality of their pets through her portrait work, found at her gallery, Jeanie Edwards Fine Art in Highlands, North Carolina. She has opened commissions for the 2025 season.

Laura Hausler brings classical training and contemporary vision to her exceptional pet portraits. Creating work from her dual background in painting and drawing, Hausler offers her unique style and aesthetic to her clients. Her distinct aesthetic unites traditional techniques with contemporary sensibility creating not only a portrait, but an original experience. "My pieces are collected as drawings, paintings or both!" She notes. "I approach each commission with meticulous observation and soulful perception that defines my fine art practice." Hausler has both a contemporary painting philosophy and a background in traditional practice from the Florence Academy of Art.

Artist **Meg Harper**'s mission is to bring joy to the young and old who call animals kin, love kickin' colors and who share a deep connection to the earth. "I love transforming minds and materials. Why use traditional canvas when you can utilize so many upcycled materials that have more personality, inspire people to reuse and have added benefits?" The artist asks. "My subjects are joyful and based in love and peace, often inspiring laughter. My canvases are surfaces like street signs, cabinet doors, game boards, card tables and more. "We all know nature is healing and my paintings are no different. I want to keep improving my stewardship of the earth and help to co-create a brilliant reality for us all."

Many of Harper's pieces can be hung outdoors. She is well versed in commissioned pet portraits. ●

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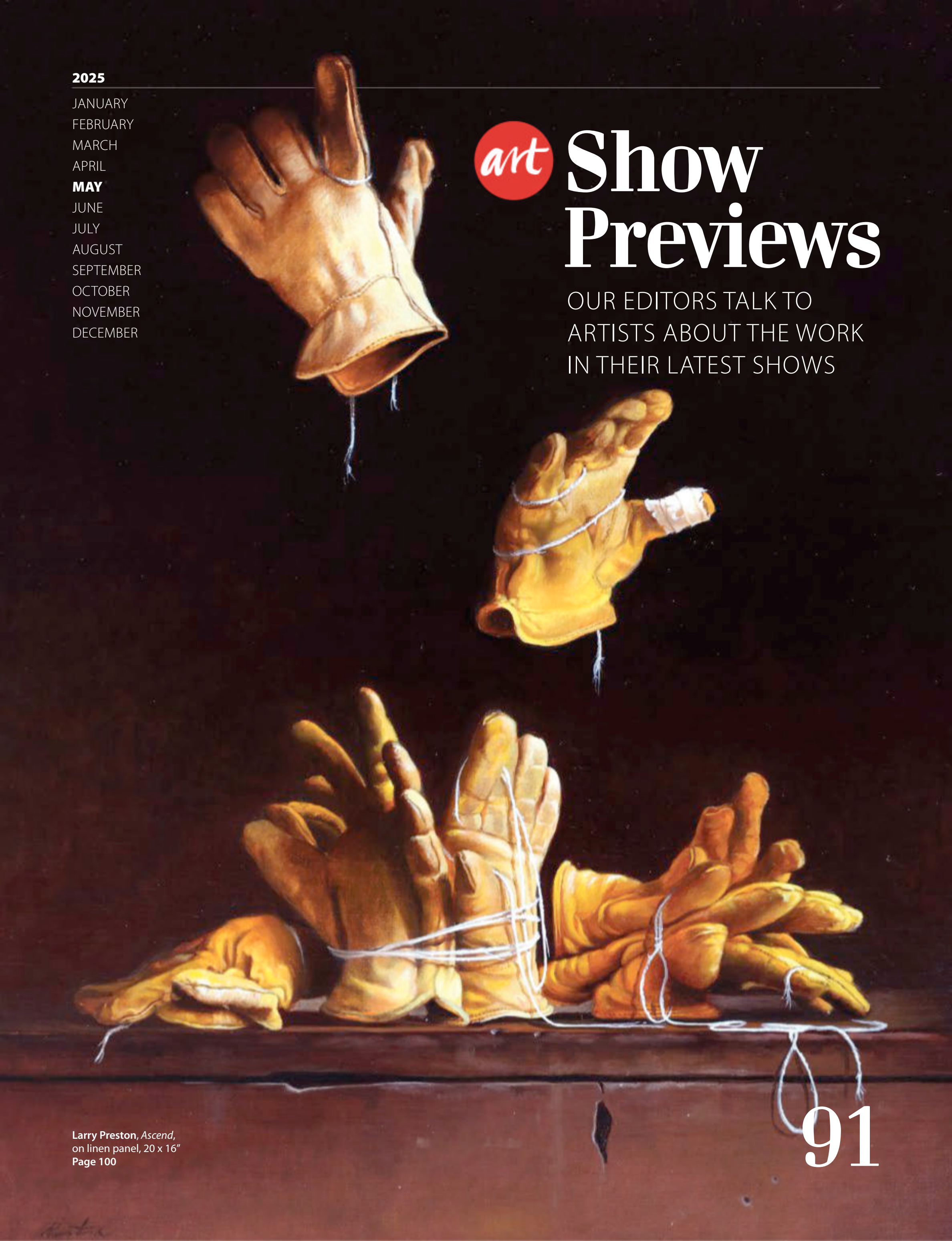

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DECEMBER

art Show Previews

OUR EDITORS TALK TO ARTISTS ABOUT THE WORK IN THEIR LATEST SHOWS

Larry Preston, *Ascend*,
on linen panel, 20 x 16″
Page 100

TYLER VOUROS

Night Calls

In Tyler Vouros' *Birds of Prey* series, the Massachusetts artist paints owls and other predatory birds within classic landscape scenery made famous by 19th-century artists such as John Atkinson Grimshaw, Thomas Cole, Martin Johnson Heade, Albert Bierstadt and Asher B. Durand. The images are flat, but for Vouros the world is three dimensional.

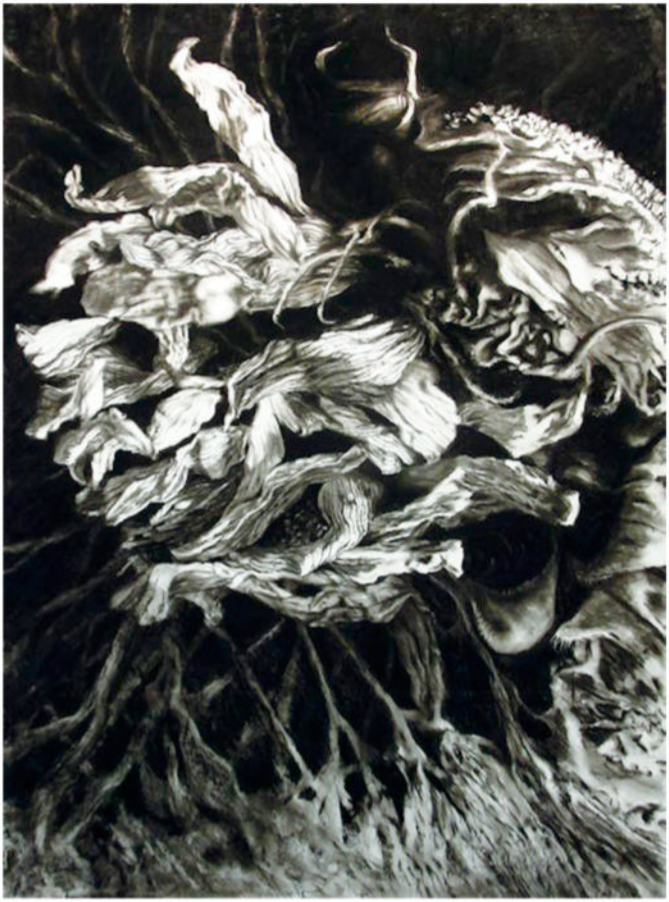
"It's really all about world building for me as the landscape becomes a much stronger component in these images. These images offer deeper explorations of space and ideas," he says. "They're also sort of romantic because I can step into the settings being created. They are part imagination, part Old Master landscapes. I can step inside and look around and find new places to discover."

He continues: "I can manipulate anything. I can fast forward time, or go backward, or play with the atmosphere and background. The landscapes refer to the Old Masters and the Hudson River School, but they are also new locations that expand the world for me."

Vouros will be showing these pieces in a new show, *Night Calls*, opening May 1 at RJD Gallery in Romeo, Michigan. The show will include many of the *Birds of Prey* images, as well as entries in a series he made of dried sunflowers. All of the works are made with charcoal on paper, which adds to the mystique of the works and their delicate presentation.

"Tyler's works are pure magic that present quiet, atmospheric scenes of owls and hawks in their natural habitat," says Joi Jackson Perle, RJD's gallery director. "There is a mysterious, intimate quality to the birds themselves; their piercing eyes let us see them not just as wildlife but as individuals each with their own unique beauty. To render these creatures in charcoal in such stunning and incredible detail is truly a bit of wizardry."

In *Magoo*, Vouros perches an owl in front of a scene that might appear in a painting by English painter Grimshaw, who was known for his evocative nocturnes of barren landscapes, harbor scenes and quiet street views. "Those works blow me away. He created a world



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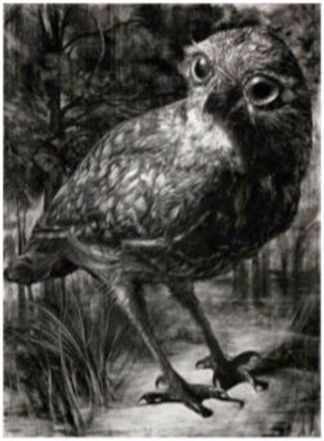

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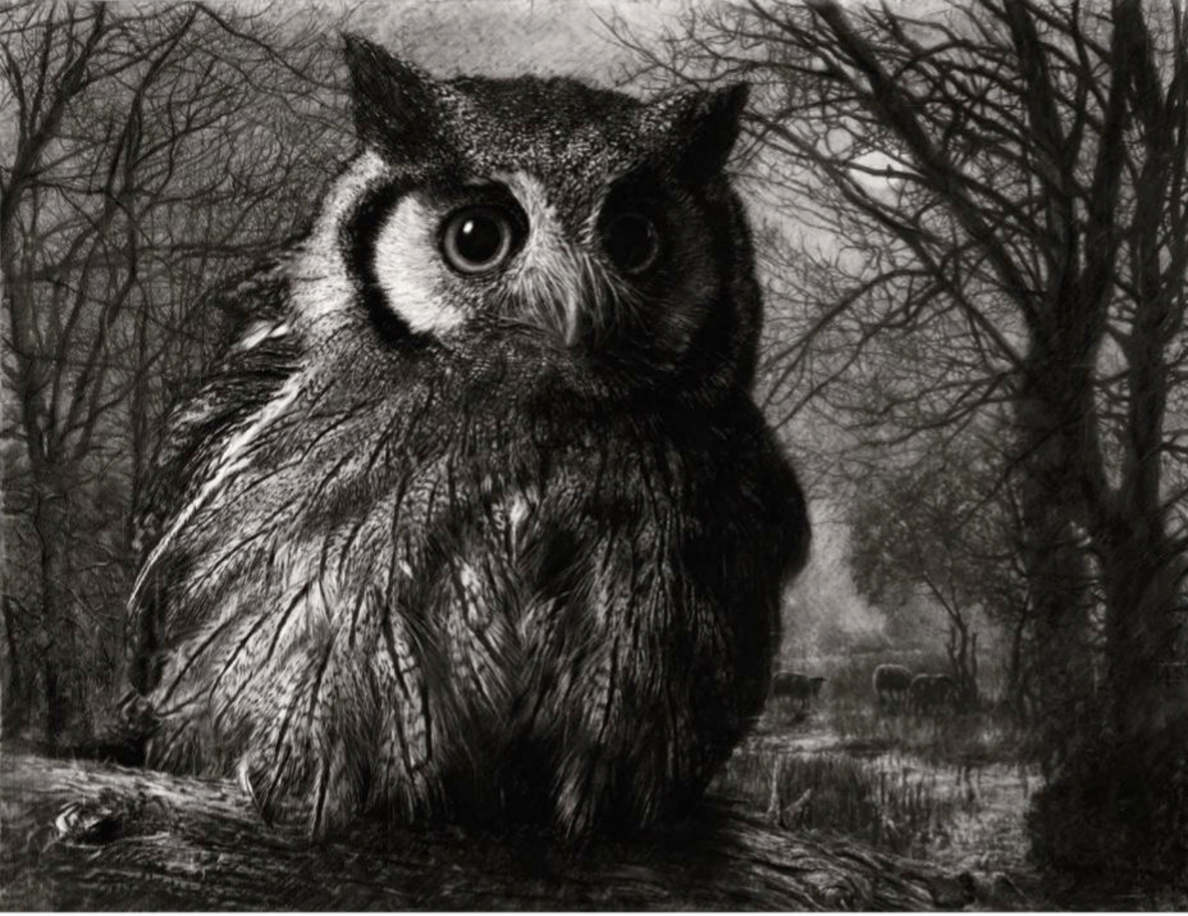
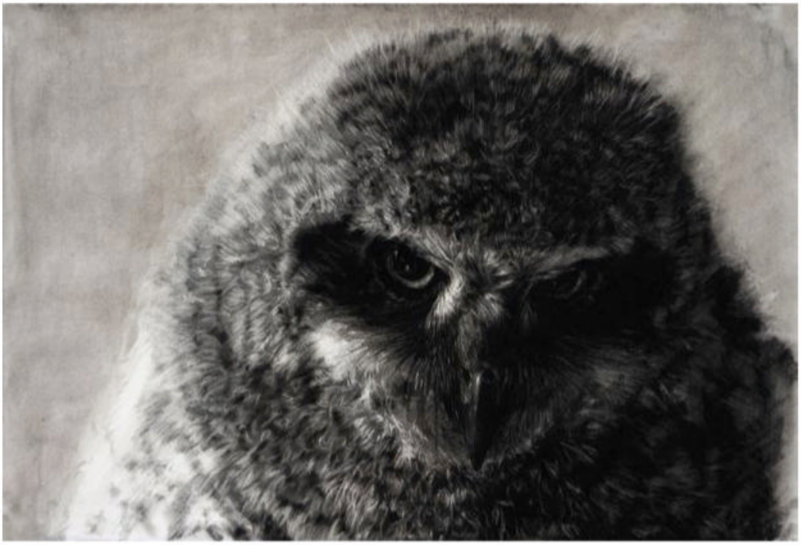


1
Dried Sunflower #5, charcoal and watercolor on paper, 79 x 61"

2
Athena, charcoal and water mounted on deep canvas, 41 x 29½"

3
Magoo, charcoal and water on deep mounted canvas, 42 x 56"

4
Rooney, charcoal and water on deep mounted canvas, 15 x 22"



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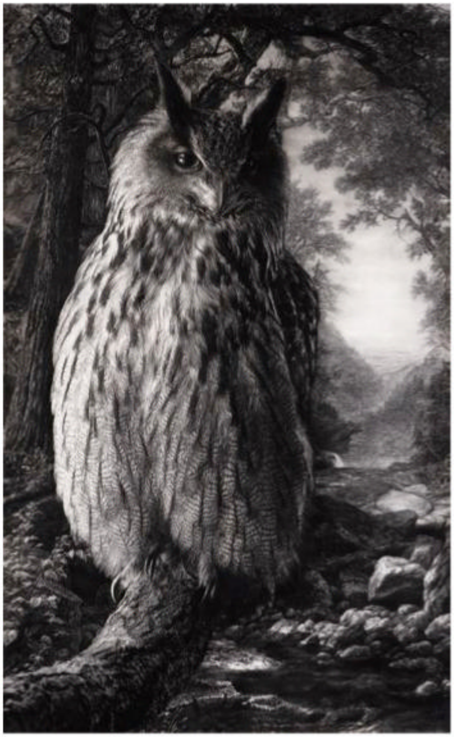

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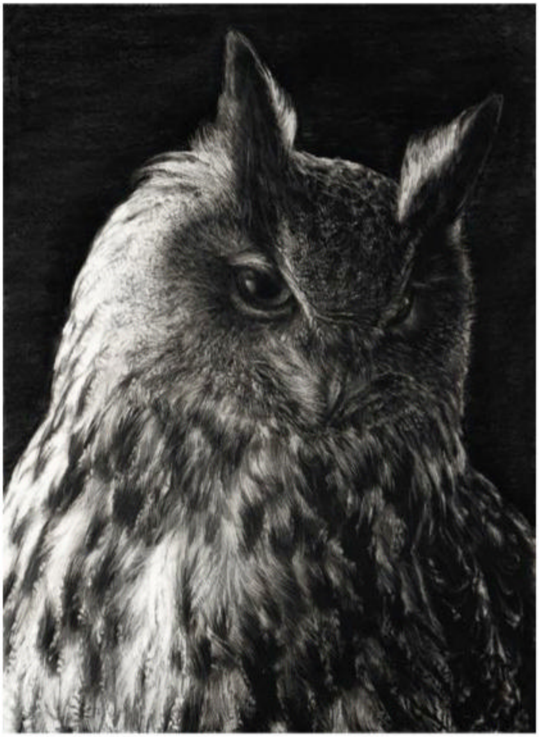

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worth exploring, so when I get inside my painting I just have a conversation with these artists I see as monoliths in the world of art," the artist says. "Mostly, though, I want to give these birds places to live, which is where the landscapes come in."

The process for the works is not additive, as in creating fresh marks on white paper, but reductive, as in he creates a dark charcoal base and subtracts from it with erasers and other tools. This reductive process is the same method as stone sculpture, albeit, unlike stone, Vouros can always add more charcoal to create more depth of light or added detail.

While the process is unique to his work, he views the birds as the "secret sauce" to what he's creating. He spends a lot of time in bird sanctuaries and credits the work of wildlife educator Jane Kelly as an influence on his bird pieces. "When I first started going into bird enclosures it was really important for me because it was a unique opportunity to slow things way down. I could just go at my own pace and really look at the birds and study their forms and how light falls on them," Vouros says. "I approached it like a portrait artist and how they look at their subjects. Going slow like that and spending time with the birds gave me the added element of control, which allowed me to really study them."

He notes that some birds, especially injured birds that are wild and would likely be returned to nature, were sometimes aggressive and territorial, which allowed him to see characters in each bird. Other subjects, such as birds that could not be returned to the wild, were often used in educational programming so they were more comfortable around guests in their enclosures. Both offered him insight for his pieces.

These interactions colored Vouros' view that each of the birds have personalities, which is reflected in each of his works. He points to the bird called Lila, which is a Eurasian eagle owl. "When you go into that enclosure, you know right away that you are in the presence of an amazing creature and you know she has to be treated with a certain way," he adds. "With those talons and that huge wingspan, she gets respect."

Night Calls will remain on view through June 2 in Michigan. ●

RJD Gallery 227 N. Main Street • Romeo, MI 48065
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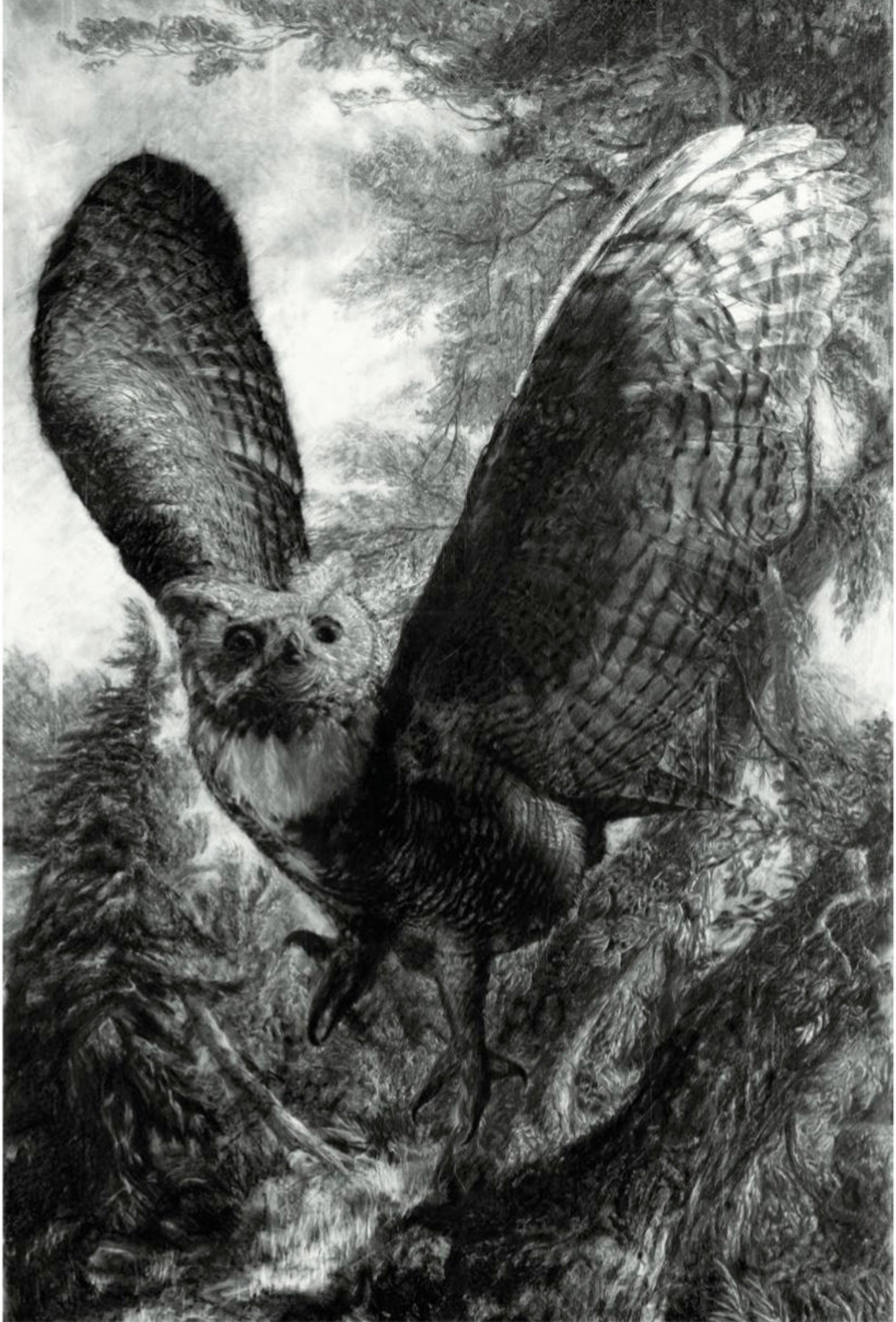
5
Lila (Eurasian Eagle Owl), charcoal and water on deep mounted canvas, 90 x 56"

6
Lila, charcoal and water mounted on deep canvas, 30 x 22"

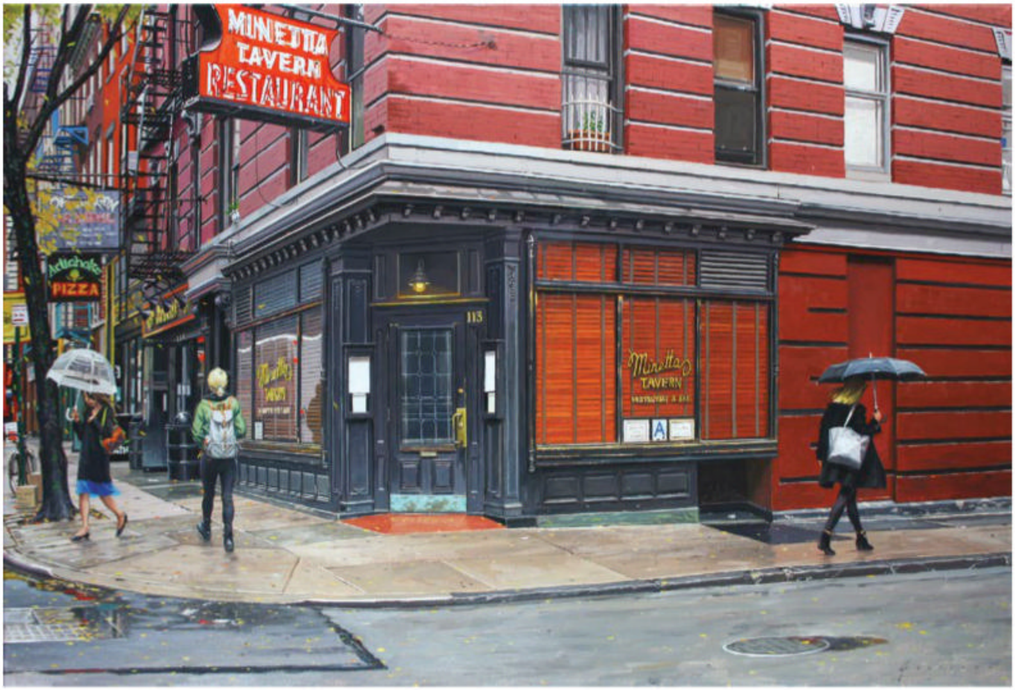
7
Kingston (Great Grey Owl), charcoal and water on deep mounted canvas, 55 x 35"



7

VINCENT GIARRANO

City Color



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Vincent Giarrano started painting New York City scenes around 25 years ago. Although Giarrano was living in Connecticut by then, he found he needed the distance to tap into the city as a source of artistic inspiration.

"Living in the city day after day, it changes how you relate to it and how you see," says Giarrano, who spent a decade after college in New York. "It's great I had those experiences but not living there day in and day out, you can really feel the energy, and get excited and inspired by it. It also allows you to see it objectively, which is really important for me."

A two-hour train ride away, Giarrano goes down to the city a couple times a month, sometimes alone but often with a model who will pose for the figurative aspect of his urban street scenes. Although Giarrano used to work primarily from plein air sketches, he enjoys a greater sense of freedom—and control—working from photographs back in the studio.

"I found, as I developed, that the important thing was to focus on the painting because that was what was going to be on the wall in the end," says Giarrano. "Either way that you paint, you have to make the painting work, and that depends on the things you change, that you add or subtract, and the concepts you bring to the painting. [Working from photographs] gives me so many more options of ways to make a painting work."

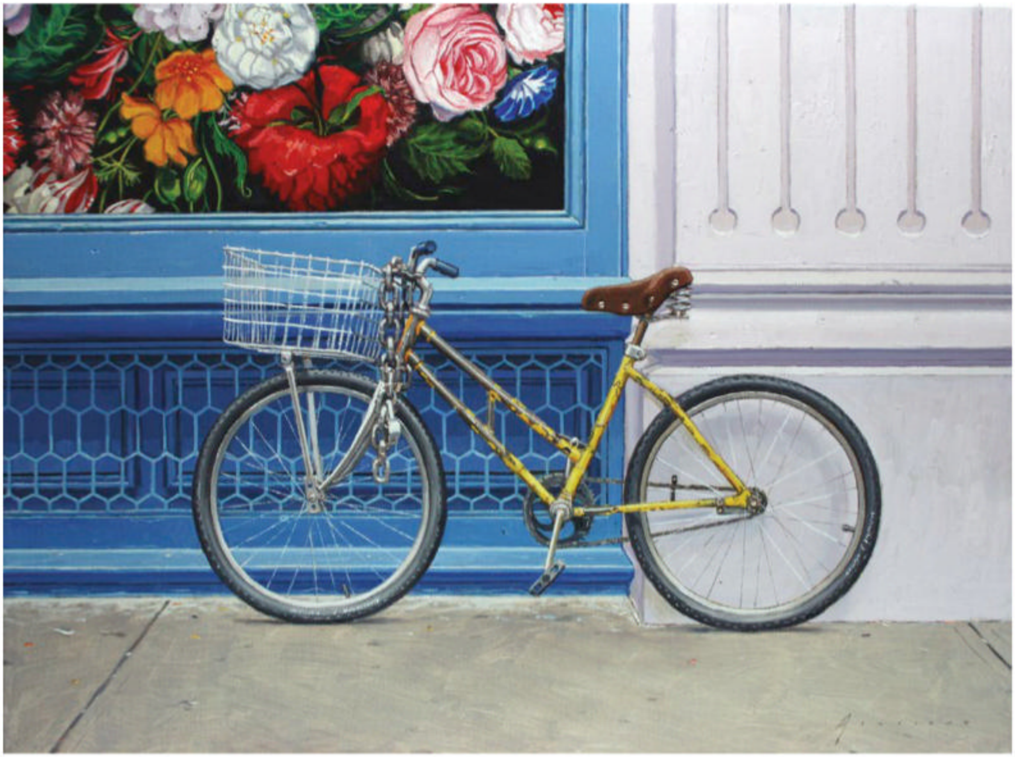
Many of Giarrano's paintings are set in lower Manhattan, including SoHo and the East and West Village, where the classical and contemporary, the vibrant and the drab, the posh and gritty, bump right up against each other, a combination the artist finds irresistible.

Bicycle in SoHo is a prime example. Giarrano explains, "In SoHo, you have these great facades that have been painted over in all these different colors... then the bicycle had this great chipped paint. I love

1
Corner in Greenwich Village, oil, 24 x 36"

2
Bicycle in SoHo, oil, 18 x 24"

3
Green Facade in Manhattan, oil, 18 x 24"



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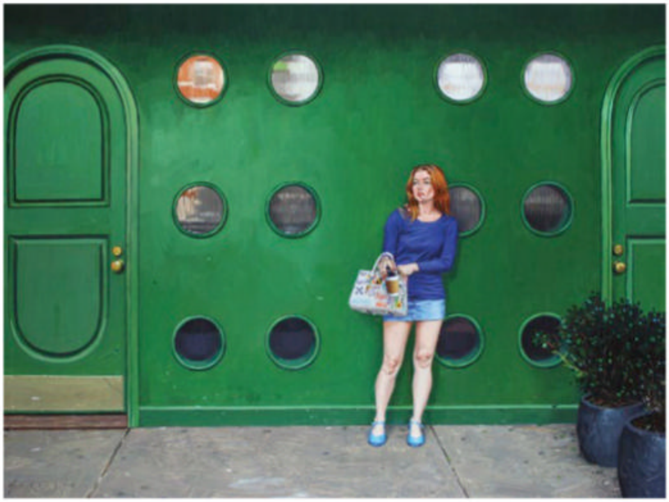
being able to capture the tactile nature of things like that. Then there are these storefront windows that are almost like a stage, presenting something colorful and lush, contrasting with the architecture."

In *Green Façade in Manhattan*, a woman stands insouciantly in front of a retro Lower East Side restaurant with porthole windows. A coffee cup dangles from the grasp of her painted nails, and a cigarette from her lips. "I love her expression, her body language and just her presence," says Giarrano. "It's like you have the strength of the architecture and the strength of her personality and I think it's such a big punch...it's got power."

The figure in *Black Doorway* is a woman Giarrano has worked with before, but he prefers not to know too much about his models to preserve a sense of mystery, which this high-heeled woman, dressed in black and furtively letting herself into the dark gray building, exudes. "I really iden-



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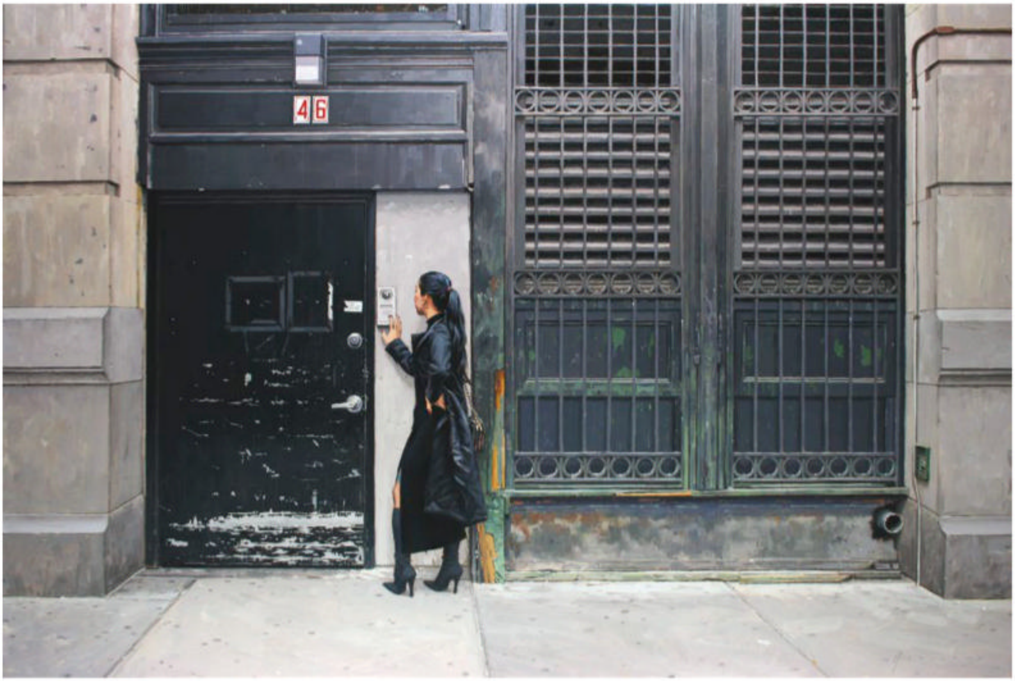

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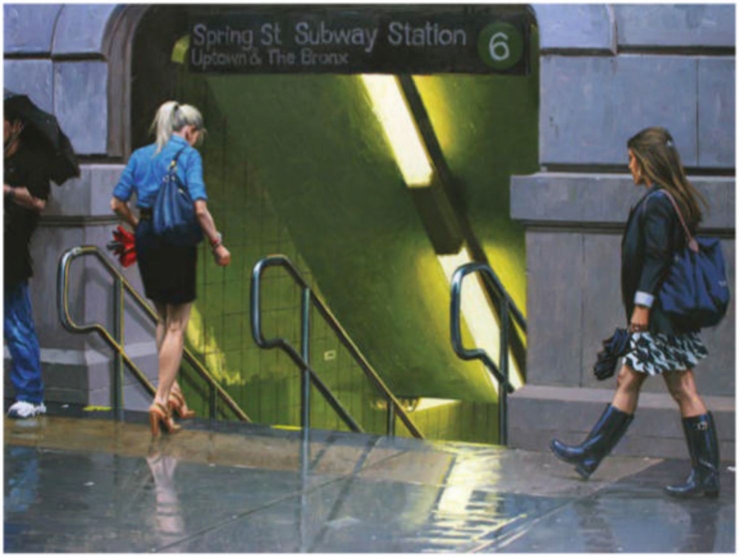
4
Black Doorway, oil, 24 x 36"

5
Subway Nocturne, oil, 18 x 24"

6
Greenwich Village Cigar Store, oil, 24 x 36"


Spring St Subway Station
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Uptown & The Bronx

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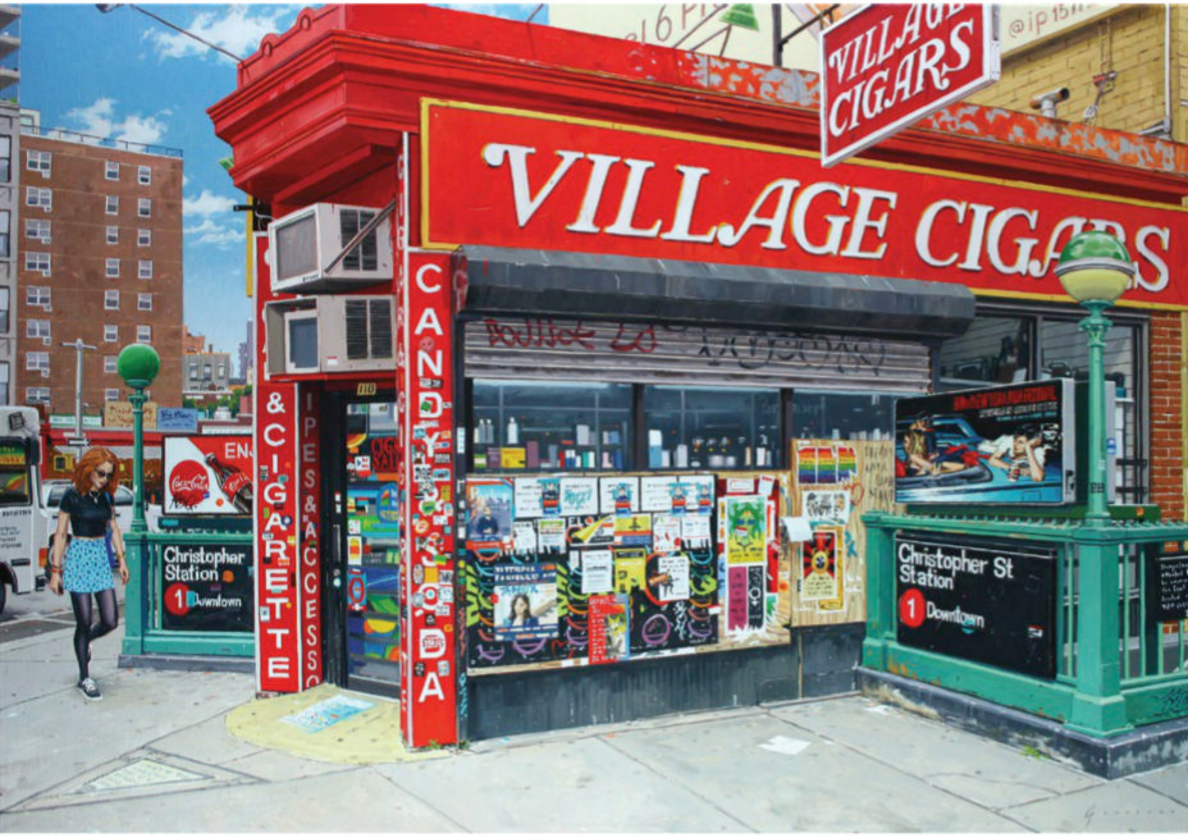

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tify with women," says Giarrano, "I have a lot of respect for them, for their clothing and their range of emotion, and how they express themselves."

Giarrano is also drawn to youth culture. It conjures his own memories of being young in New York. "There's something about young people coming to the city... they're bringing new ideas and expressing themselves. A lot of times I feel like what I'm painting is my own experience...just being a young person making my way there. I never seem to tire of it," Giarrano says of his subject matter. "I go to the city and I'm inspired by different things and try to give myself new experiences. You're always surprised by what you see in the city."

Corner in Greenwich Village depicts a blood-red building intensified by its black trim, gold accents and a recent rain—a street corner that Giarrano has always been attracted to. *Greenwich Village Cigar Store* is another saturated concentration of color and visual information. "I love a dense subject," he says. "When something is a lot of things...they become shapes, almost jewel-like, and so appealing and inviting. That's the magic of paint."

Perhaps most critical for Giarrano is that his scenes capture real-life moments that feel authentic. "I knew that what I painted about had to be about truth," he says. "Not making art about art, so convoluted and clever it's ridiculous. I wanted it to be sincere, something people could relate to. It's really about life and the human experience, and what it's like to be walking around...living in the moment and experiencing the energy of the city."

City Color opens with a reception on Friday, May 2, from 5 to 8 p.m., and remains on view at Susan Powell Fine Art through the end of the month. ●

Susan Powell Fine Art 679 Boston Post Road
Madison, CT 06443 • (203) 318-0616
www.susanpowellfineart.com

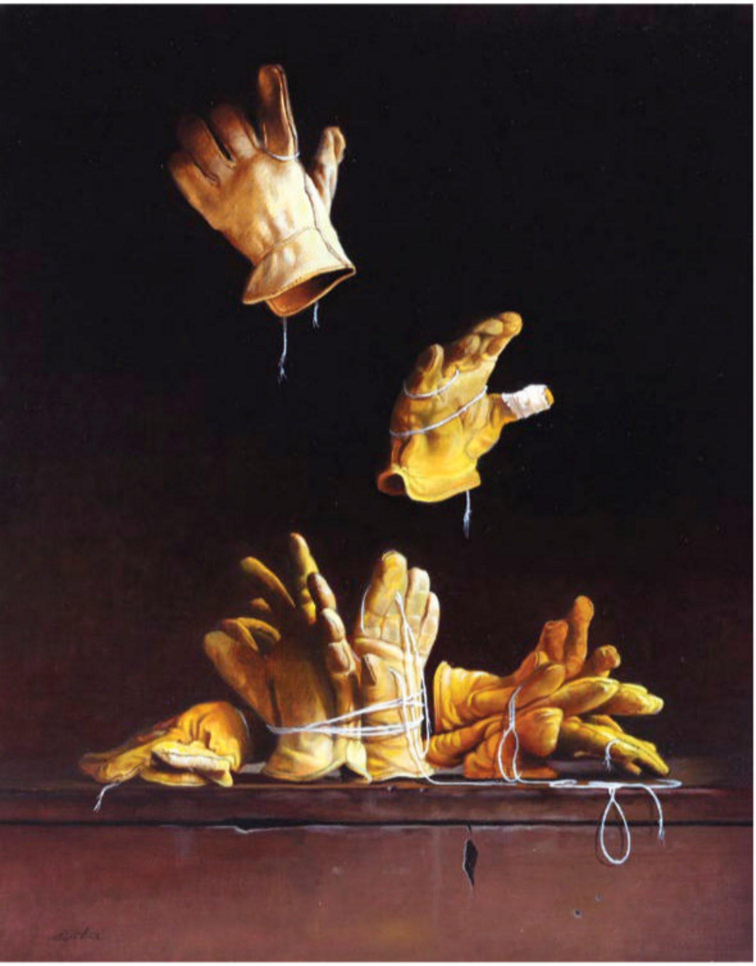
UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / WILLIAM BACZEK FINE ARTS
4/23-6/14 Northampton, MA

Realism Reframed

By Erin E. Rand

This spring, William Baczek Fine Arts in Northampton, Massachusetts, will present a group show featuring works in oil by Julie Beck, Larry Preston and Scott Prior. Each artist is a master of realism in their own right, but they bring diverse perspectives and techniques to their paintings, demonstrating the power of oil painting to capture the world around us. The three artists each provide a unique take on realism, offering viewers a journey through the tangible and the intangible, the familiar and the mysterious.

Prior has painted the everyday moments of New England for more than 50 years, and Provincetown, Massachusetts, in particular holds special meaning for him. “In 1969, I quit my job as a dishwasher in a restaurant and hung my watercolor paintings on a fence on Commercial Street in Provincetown,” he says. “I have been painting ever since.”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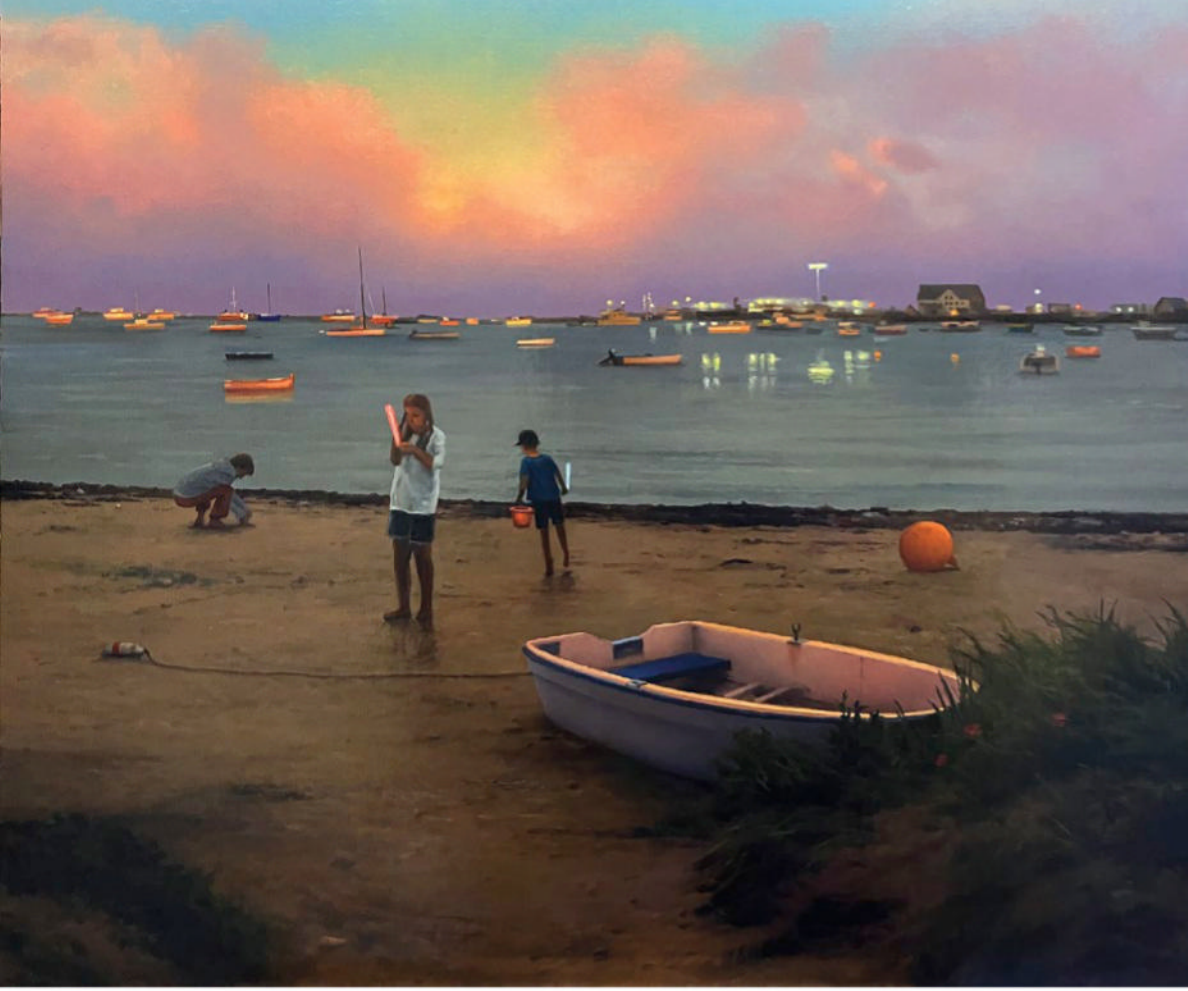
Inspired by Edward Hopper, he transitioned from painting isolated landscapes to emotionally-charged everyday moments that play with the emotive power of light. One of his new pieces, *Children with Glow Sticks at Twilight*, exemplifies his keen sense of composition. It started as a simple seascape depicting the Provincetown harbor, but he felt something more was needed in the foreground, so he added a boat and children playing. “To balance the lights in the distance, I put glow sticks in the children’s hands,” he explains. The result is a whimsical scene that captures a familiar sense of nostalgia and wonder.

Prior’s *Cabin with Two Towels* shows a house at the end of a long walking path, two towels hanging on the line to dry as the day fades. “The New England landscape is small and intimate and directs our attention to things close at hand,” he says. In Prior’s work, even the most commonplace scenes carry stories that are waiting to be discovered and explored.

Beck approaches her paintings with an analytical mind and a poetic sensibility, drawing from her background in engineering, mathematics and design. “Traditionally, realists avoid tangents—where lines on separate planes align—because they can flatten an image and disrupt the illusion of depth,” she explains. But in her painting *Idols, but Not Masters*, Beck deliberately breaks that rule, blurring the division between objects while still preserving a sense of dimension. The image asks viewers to rely on abstract shapes and color to perceive the space—or simply lose themselves in the interplay of the objects on canvas.

In her painting *The Only Thing Louder Than Destruction*, Beck explores the creative process as it goes from raw potential to something that’s been fully realized. She chose an oil can as the central



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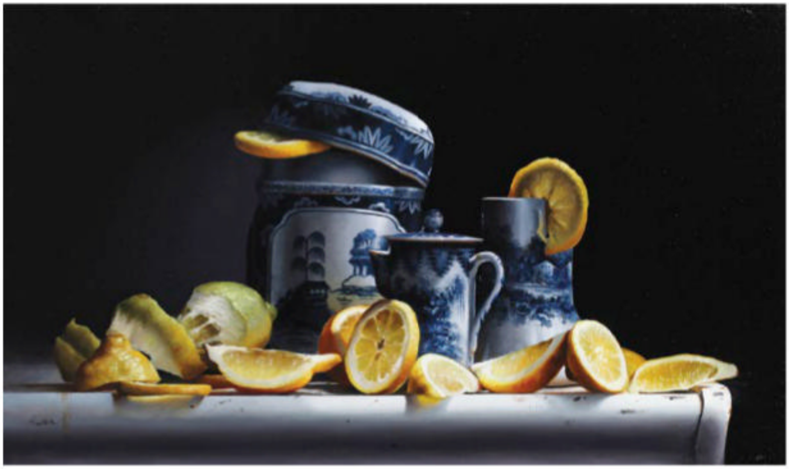

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1
Larry Preston, *Ascend*, 2025, oil on panel, 20 x 16"

2
Scott Prior, *Children with Glow Sticks at Twilight*, 2024-5, oil on panel, 15 x 18"

3
Larry Preston, *Lemons with China*, 2024, oil on panel, 14 x 24"

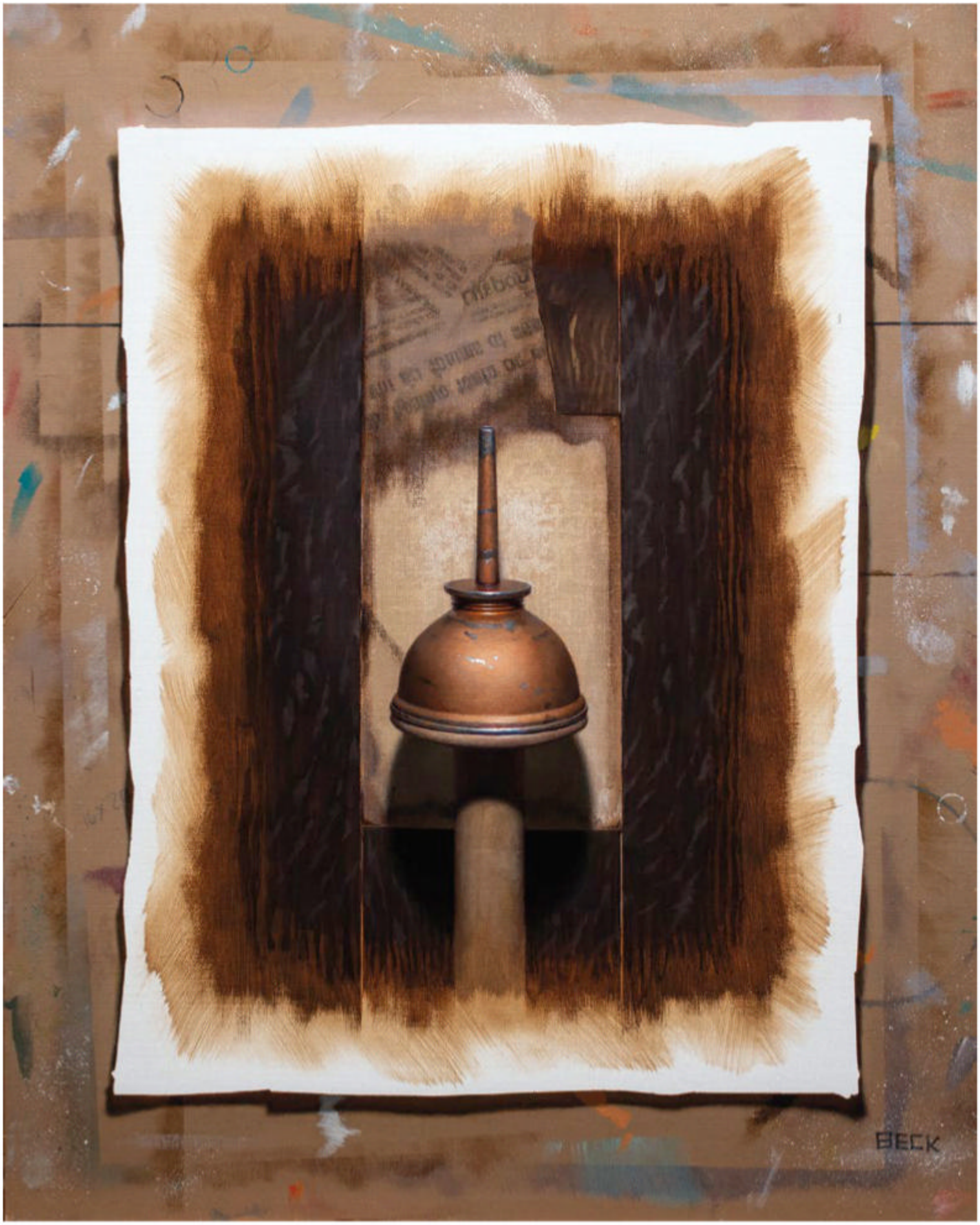

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image because it so aptly symbolizes the dual nature of creation. She says, "Oil has fueled progress, industry and innovation, yet it also carries a complex legacy of environmental and societal impact."

Preston's path to painting was circuitous. He pursued a career as a professional musician before he returned to his first love of the visual arts. As a self-taught painter, he draws inspiration from the tradition of Flemish still lifes, while still embracing a fresh and contemporary sensibility. His painting *Lemons with China* is based on a favorite arrangement of items and colors. "I use this combination often and always find something new every time I do," Preston says. With the changing interplay between color and texture, a new perspective is revealed with every iteration of the arrangement.

In Preston's *Ascend*, a pair of worn work gloves break free from gravity and float into the air. "The inspiration came from the analogy of breaking free from having your hands tied and being unable to accomplish what you want to accomplish in life," he explains. Ultimately, Preston's still lifes highlight the overlooked beauty of simple objects—a single flower, a piece of fruit, a reflective ceramic surface—reminding viewers to slow down and appreciate the quiet elegance of the world around them.

Through their distinct styles and approaches, Prior, Preston and Beck demonstrate the enduring relevance and expressive potential of realism in painting. Whether through light-drenched landscapes, meticulously crafted still lifes, or thought-provoking conceptual pieces, each artist brings a unique vision to this exhibition.

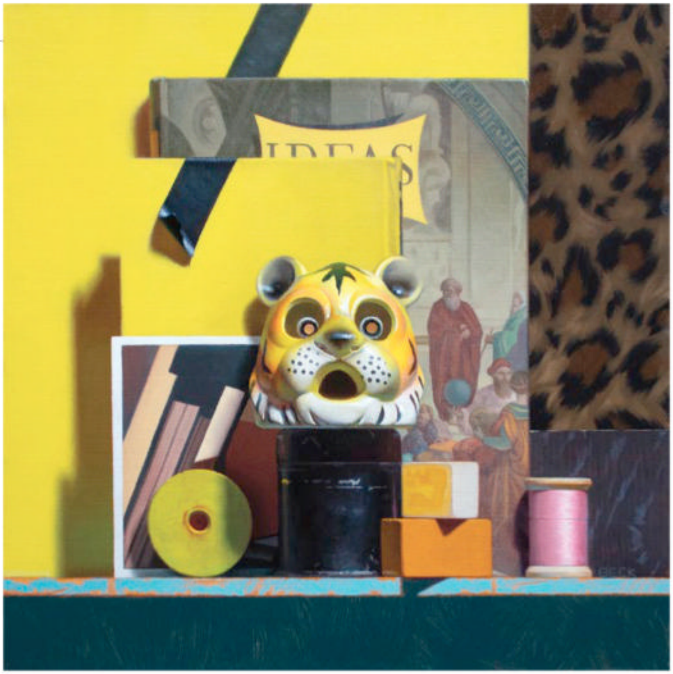
The show opens on April 23, and a public reception will be held at the gallery on April 26 from 4 to 6 p.m. It will remain on view through June 14. ●

William Baczek Fine Arts
36 Main Street • Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 587-9880 • www.wbfinearts.com

4
Julie Beck, *The Only Thing Louder than Destruction*, 2023, oil on canvas panel, 20 x 16"

5
Julie Beck, *Idols, but Not Masters*, 2023, oil on canvas panel, 12 x 12"

6
Scott Prior, *Cabin with Two Towels*, 2025, oil on panel, 12 x 12"



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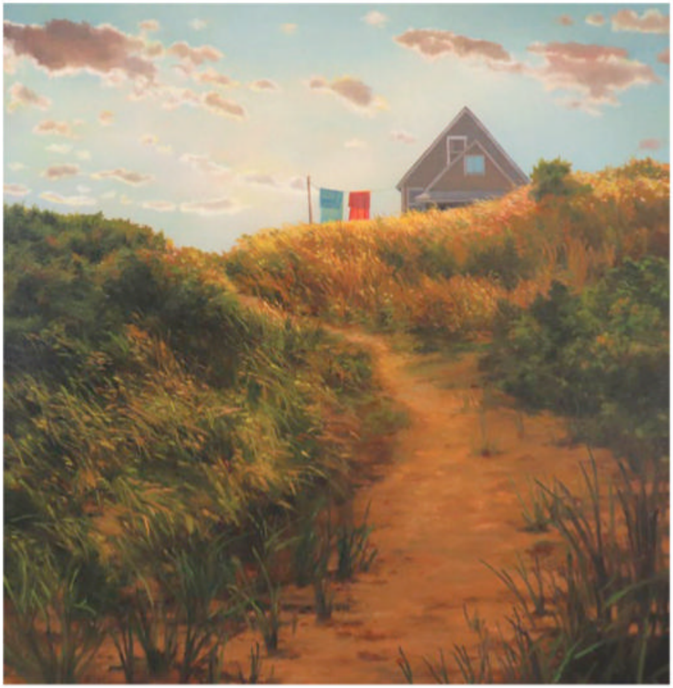

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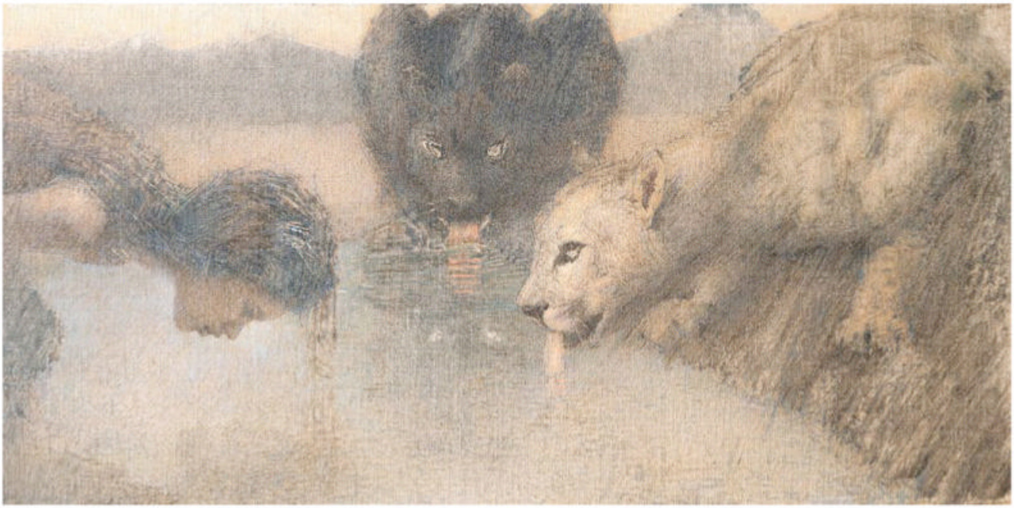
UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / ARCADIA CONTEMPORARY
5/15-5/30 New York, NY



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DANIEL BILMES

Subtle Harmonies

Daniel Bilmes had an interesting youth, one that continues to shape his evolution as an artist today. The son of Azerbaijani American painter and teacher Semyon Bilmes, Daniel's Russian-born parents impulsively left New York for a remote area near Ashland, Oregon, where he was homeschooled for much of his upbringing. After time abroad in Turkey and on the Mediterranean island of Cypress, the family returned to the Pacific Northwest, where Semyon Bilmes founded the Ashland Academy of Art. At 9 years old, Daniel was painting alongside his father's adult students and, by 15, he was teaching them.

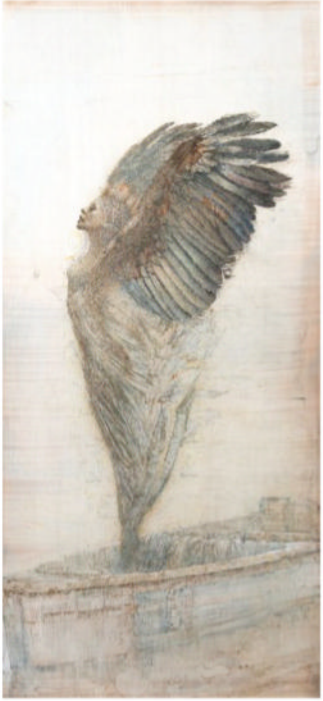
Daniel thrived in the academy environment. It was the closest he had known to a traditional classroom experience and he found he enjoyed being in the company of adults. It also provided a structure that allowed for a broad exploration of varied techniques and surfaces—and to delve into the more conceptual aspects of process—as he looked for ways to translate his affinity for drawing into oil painting.

Ever since, Bilmes' evolution as an artist has been a result of deep personal inquiry into, and refinement of, preference and process.

"The most natural and unique styles come out of a process that is true for the individual and works for the individual," says Bilmes. "I needed to develop a unique process that was in tune with who I was, style being derived from technique, rather than technique imitating a style. I was really deconstructing my technique with charcoal and applying some of those stylistic elements from drawing to painting, and marrying that with my personal interests in color harmonies, texture and subject matter."

His latest body of work, the subject of a May exhibition at Arcadia Contemporary, demonstrates Bilmes' highly distinctive aesthetic—dreamy, soft figurative scenes where realism dissolves into abstraction, the mark-making of drawing prevalent on his canvases.

Thematically, the series explores myth and archetypes, the timeless universal stories, variations of which can be found



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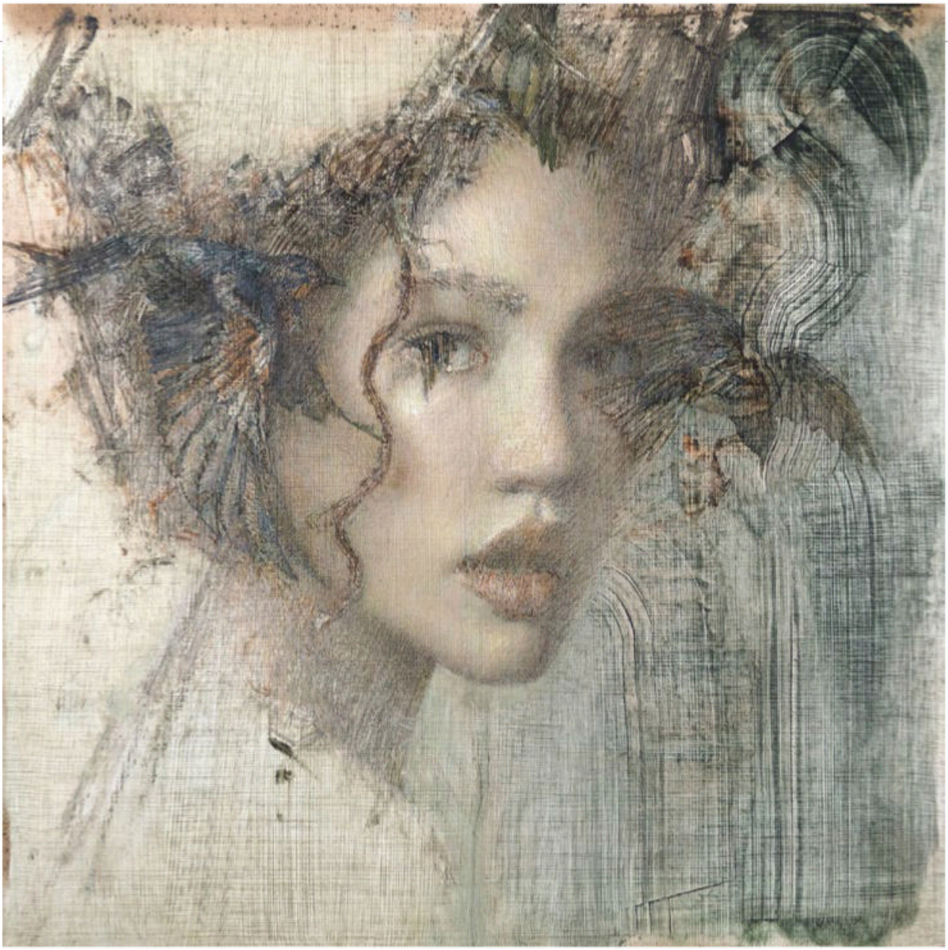

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across disparate cultures. Bilmes offers his own interpretations. "I've always been fascinated with certain patterns and interests that people have had since [sitting around] fires and painting on cave walls. I wanted to explore mythology and the archetypes in the stories people tell each other throughout time. It's the way our ancestors viewed the world, and I think it's still relevant even though people view it differently now. I've enjoyed reinterpreting or coming up with a new version of a story that has inspired people for generations."

In *Metamorphosis,* a winged woman emerges triumphantly from a tornado-shaped chrysalis hovering over the hull of a simple skiff, against a continuum of blanched sea and sky. "I was really wanting to paint wings on a woman," explains Bilmes. "That one, again, comes back to the idea of transformation—that feeling of transition, transcendence into another state, a higher state. It's the feeling that drives it and subject is around that."

Wellspring, in which a girl gazes into her watery reflection while two beasts crouch on their haunches to drink, could be an illustration in a Grimms' fairy tale.

"I think transformation and transition and evolution [are themes] in both my work and personal life. In the world as well as on a personal level, the rate of change has become so exponential...it can be exciting and daunting," he says. "This could be why I've revisited historical material and root my subject matter in something timeless. I think there's a natural human craving for the timeless and I think, through art, ideas and stories we can feed that to ourselves. That duality of the ever-changing world and the human condition...I don't think really changes that much. Human instincts, impulses, cravings, goals, dreams, fears—they're all pretty timeless."

Bilmes' show *Mythos* opens in New York City on May 15 and remains on view through May 30. ●

1
Wellspring, oil on panel, 8 x 16"

2
Metamorphosis, oil on panel, 22 x 10"

3
Winsome, oil on panel, 14 x 14"

Arcadia Contemporary 421 W. Broadway
New York, NY 10012 • (646) 861-3941
www.arcadiacontemporary.com

MATTHEW SIEVERS AND BRYCE PETTIT

Wondrous Wilderness

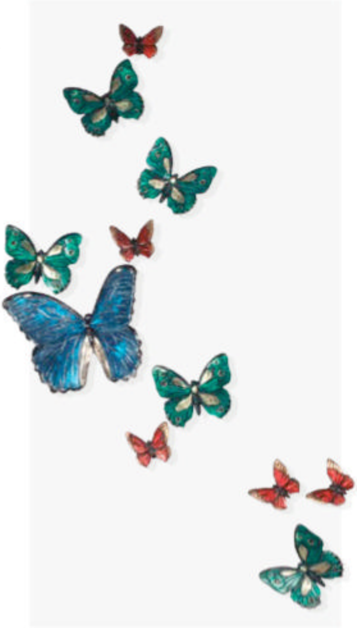
For their forthcoming show at Blue Rain Gallery, *Nature & Emotion: Sculpting the Elements, Painting the Light*, painter Matthew Sievers and sculptor Bryce Pettit create quite the emotional journey for collectors. In addition, they celebrate movement, texture and light—"an homage to the wilderness and the wondrous," says gallery marketing director, Leah Garcia.

Pettit shares that both he and Sievers use texture to convey emotion. "Hard and sharp lines create excitement or drama, and smoother edges and transitions to evoke peace or quietude," says Pettit. "My ongoing goal with my art is to make you feel something. I am continually striving to refine this ability and create the connections that make us human."

Sievers shares that, for his latest series of landscape paintings, he's using many transparent layers to create atmosphere in addition to abstraction. "I want the viewer to be inspired with their own creativity as they look at my painting," he says. "I'm using vague geometric shapes where you would expect an organic form, like a bush or the edge of a cloud, stacking them thinly over top of each other and shifting like a memory. These square cloud shapes, low on a horizon, can have the viewer imagining it being a distant hill or a plateau."

Pettit presents several new pieces this year, revisiting subjects and concepts that he explored early in his career. "After 25 years as a sculptor, there are a few pieces that I did early on that I now feel I have the ability to better execute my intention for the subject," he says. There will be several new bird sculptures, as well as new additions to Pettit's wall-hanging sculpture series, including his butterfly display *Kaleidoscope*.

About his piece *First Step*, depicting a young deer, Pettit says, "When my children were young, we would go on walks in the wood together. On one such walk in spring, we came upon a newly born fawn lying in the grass. It stayed perfectly still while my children looked on in awe only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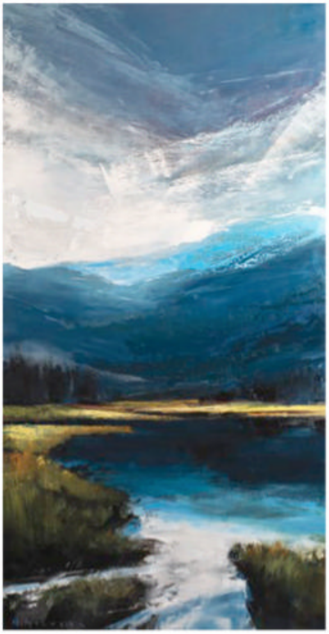
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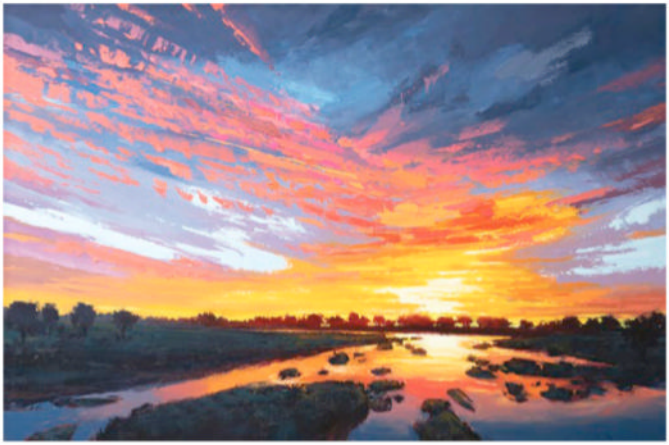
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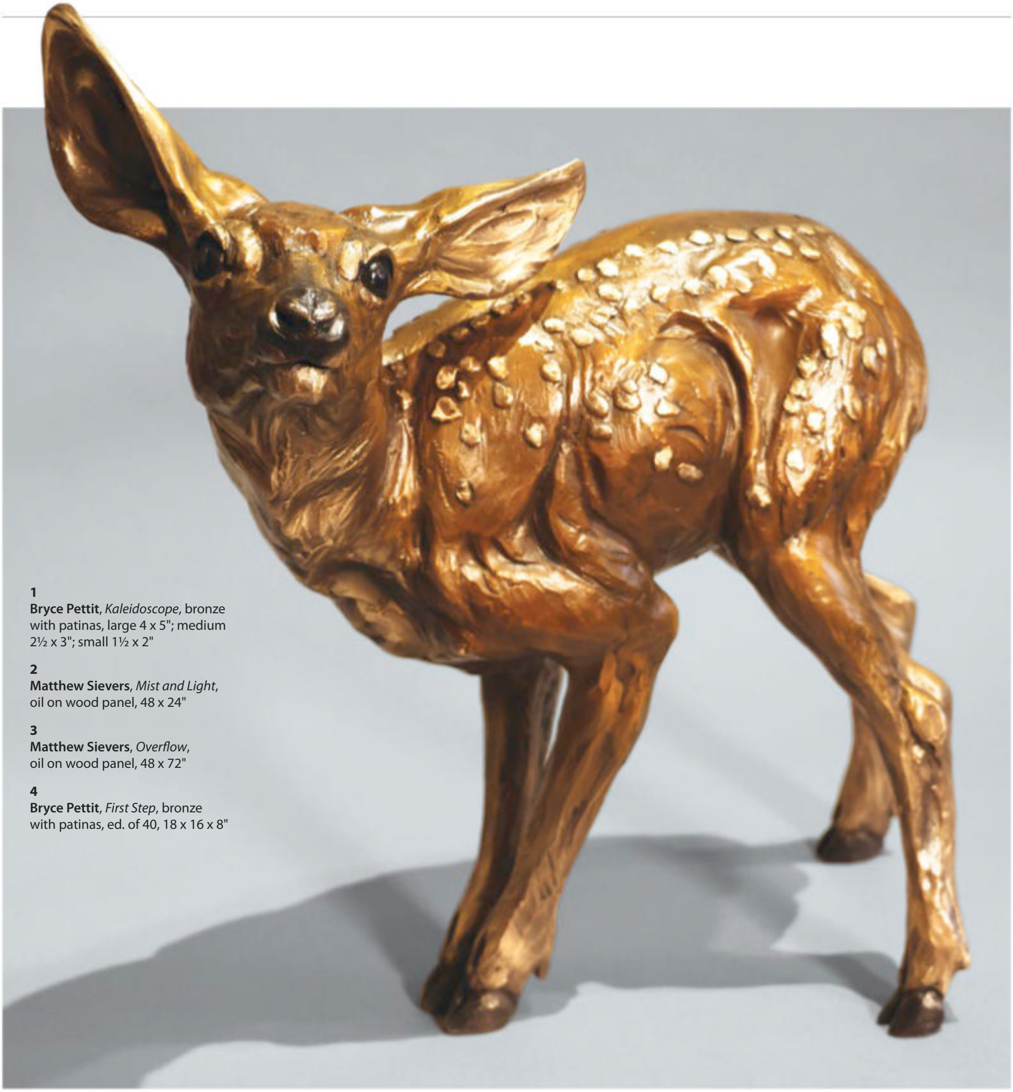
1
Bryce Pettit, *Kaleidoscope*, bronze with patinas, large 4 x 5"; medium 2½ x 3"; small 1½ x 2"

2
Matthew Sievers, *Mist and Light*, oil on wood panel, 48 x 24"

3
Matthew Sievers, *Overflow*, oil on wood panel, 48 x 72"

4
Bryce Pettit, *First Step*, bronze with patinas, ed. of 40, 18 x 16 x 8"



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inches apart. We quietly backed away after a moment, but the thrill of the encounter stayed with us. The magic of experiences like that are what inspire my work and are the first step in the inspiration for my sculptures."

As for Sievers' pieces, like *Mist in Light* and *Overflow*, the artist is inspired by moments in nature with his family. "[It's about] getting away from the busy day-to-day and having a peaceful moment as we talk to the person closest to us about our hopes, dreams and troubles," he says. "It's a mindset that I'm often in as I paint my landscapes—imagining a walk with one of my boys as we find growth and change. Learning to accept ourselves and then seeing a gorgeous sunset as we sit in silence. So many of my paintings are inspired by the memories that I have made with my family and the emotions that I have felt—emotions worth conveying to my collectors.

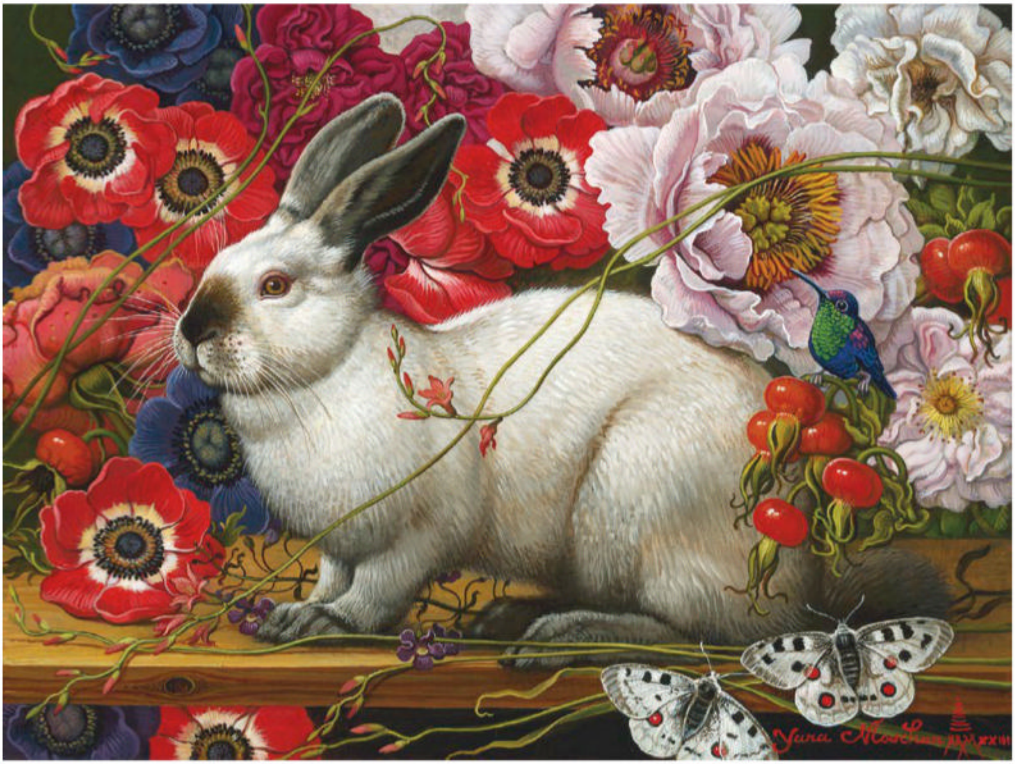
The show opens with an artist's reception at Blue Rain Gallery's Santa Fe, New Mexico, location on April 25, from 5 to 7 p.m., and continues through May 6.

Blue Rain Gallery 544 S. Guadalupe Street • Santa Fe, NM 87501 • (505) 954-9902 • www.blueraingallery.com

UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / LILY PAD GALLERY WEST
Through 6/1 Milwaukee, WI

YANA MOVCHAN

Enchanting Visions



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On display at Lily Pad Gallery West are stimulating visuals brought to life by painter Yana Movchan. Her solo show, *Expression & Enchantment*, is a carefully curated collection that explores the interplay between memory, nature and imagination. In approximately 12 new pieces, the artist builds her whimsical world by combining lush textures, vibrant botanicals and a sense of movement.

"Movchan transports us to a realm where hyper realistic figures intertwine with nature, creating powerful symbolic narratives," says gallery owner Alan Perlstein. "Her meticulously-crafted works combine classical techniques with surrealistic elements, inviting reflection on themes of innocence and transformation. A graduate of the Ukrainian Art Academy, Yana has exhibited her award-winning art across Europe and Canada, now residing in Halifax."

For the show, the artist shares that she's using old techniques to make her paintings look "airy." She adds, "I am covering canvases three times with ochre and [eventually] achieving a very smooth surface. I'm also using many layers to create more depth. It gives me more room to edit fine details. When I was in academy, I was experimenting with different styles of art, but at the end, it felt like I wasted my time. I was always returning to realism—my big passion!"

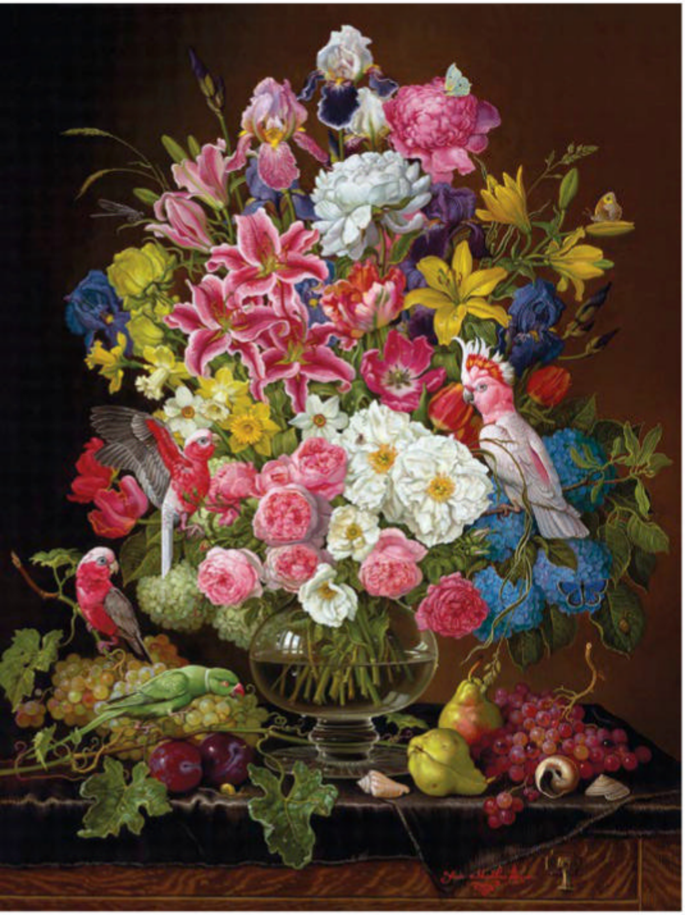
In her intricately-detailed show piece *Floral with Parrots*, the artist gave herself permission to work large—allowing time to play with color and texture. "There's a great variety of different flowers, fruits, birds and butterflies that gave me [the inspiration to] create a beautiful [piece]," she says.

1
Rabbit and Poppies, oil on canvas, 12 x 16"

2
Floral with Parrots, oil on canvas, 48 x 36"

3
English Girl, oil on canvas, 16 x 16"

4
Kitten, oil on canvas, 14 x 11"



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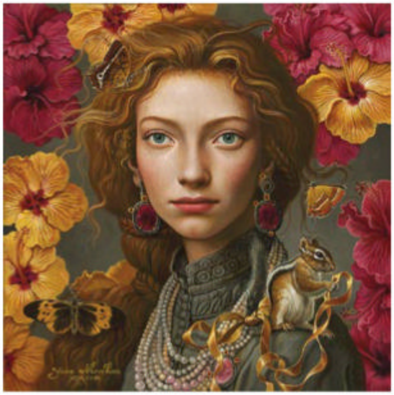

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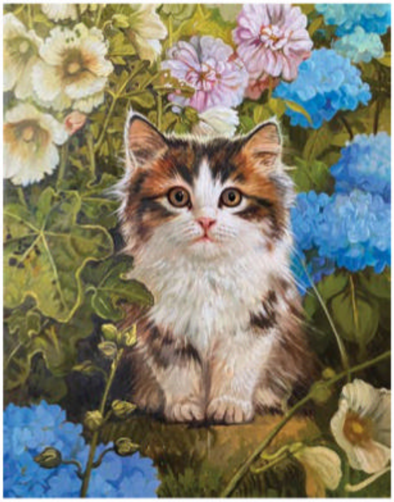

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"This composition, like life, includes little bit of everything. Some flowers are big and bright, like some moments in our lives, [while others] are blending in with the surrounding and washing away."

Movchan also notes that she added imperfect shapes, leaves and flowers to make the work beautifully imperfect.

We see the artist incorporating many of the same elements in the painting *Rabbit and Poppies*, while making her main subject exactly what the title suggests—a rabbit. "I [created] this painting with a very unusual combination of colors," Movchan explains. "Red is power, and purple is wisdom, giving an interesting flavor to the painting. The soft black and white [rabbit] is seemingly enjoying its surroundings."

About her striking portrait *English Girl*, Movchan says, "My inspiration for this was two British designers, Carrie Lamb and Burberry. Burgundy and beige, with a touch of black and white, provides balance in this composition. The painting, both powerful and peaceful, depicts a girl surrounded by beautiful things. She is connected to nature around her; to butterflies, animals and gems. The beauty of her garden nurtures her soul, it provides purpose and strength as she navigates her journey. Beauty is her music!"

To witness more bold and whimsical paintings by Movchan, head to Lily Pad Gallery West. where you can view her new work through June 1. ●

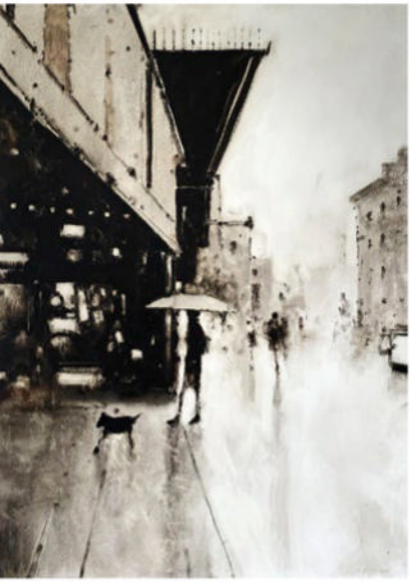
Lily Pad Gallery West 215 N. Broadway,
Milwaukee, WI 53202 • (414) 509-5756
www.lilypadgallery.com

UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / PRINCIPLE GALLERY
5/16-6/9 Alexandria, VA

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

The Things Unsaid

By Gina Teichert



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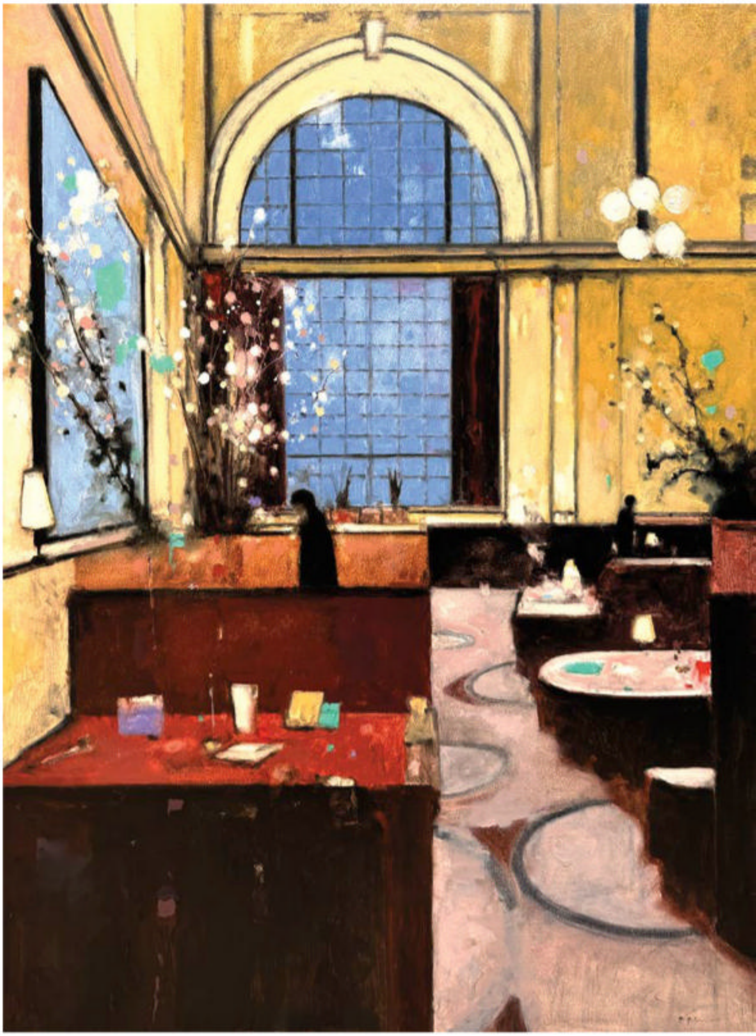
Gray days and backlit city commutes. Details blown out as last light dips behind manmade horizons. Bodies and skylines, more composites of city life than a portrait of any one person or place. Perhaps best known for these spare street scenes, Geoffrey Johnson, in his upcoming show at Principle Gallery in Alexandria, Virginia, riffs off ideas familiar and new.

Rendered with a push and pull of impasto and watercolor-like washes, Johnson explores luxe interiors and European landmarks alongside rodeos, and scenes from sidewalk to sea. "Subject matter for me is just pretty random," Johnson explains, pointing to new work he created from a trip to California's Central Coast. "I would have never thought I would have painted from California," he says. "I didn't think I would be inspired—I'm not painting the landscape very much."

Seeing Johnson's cityscapes, you might assume he's from New York or, possibly, Europe. Surprisingly, Johnson, who lives



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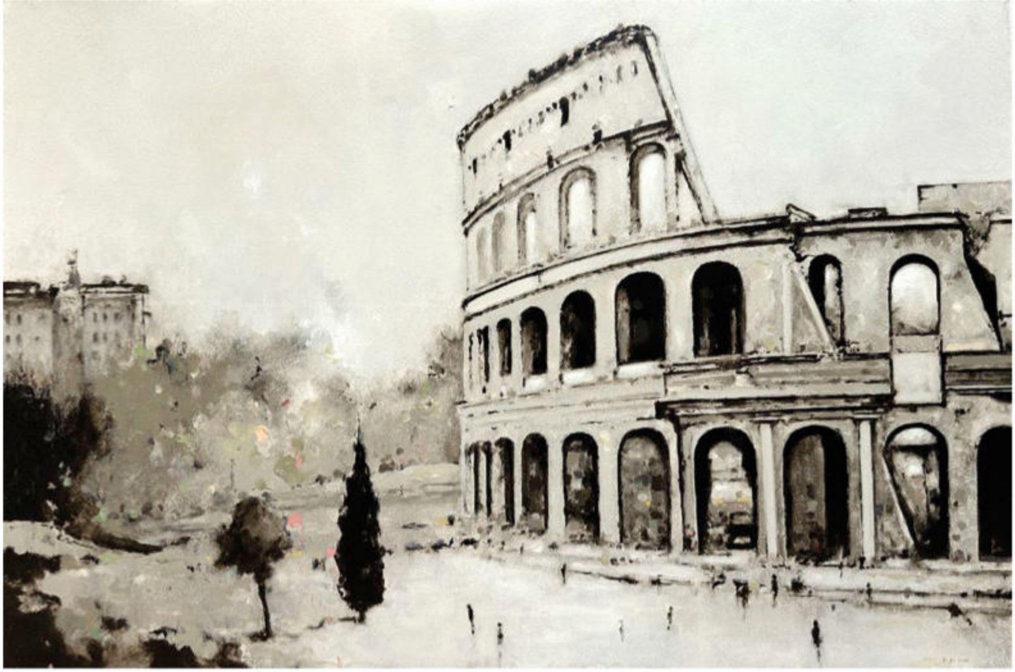
1
Market in Rain, oil on board, 24 x 18"

2
Hotel Bar, oil on board, 40 x 30"

3
Rome III, oil on board, 24 x 36"

4
Billy Boy, oil on board, 24 x 36"



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in North Carolina, "is sort of a Southern gentleman as opposed to an urbanite or a guy from New York City," says Principle Gallery director Clint Mansell.

With a working relationship spanning 18 years, Johnson is one of the gallery's longest-standing artists. "He is one of the most popular artists that we represent," says Mansell, noting how gallery visitors gravitate toward his work. "He's one of the artists that people stop by [to see] every time they come in."

Toggling between thin, stain-like areas and zones of thick paint, sometimes applied with a scrap of cardboard or scratched into with the handle of a brush, Johnson's work is at once intimate and composition forward.

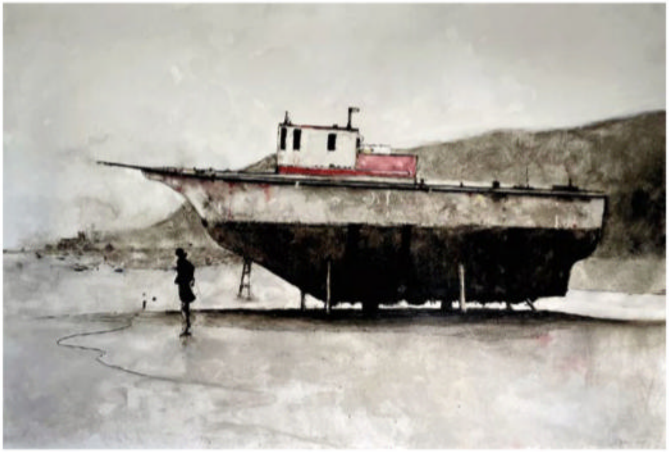
"His design sense is sort of at the forefront of all of his paintings," Mansell continues. "The way he places figures among abstracted backgrounds or cityscapes or interiors, the relationship between the figure and the environment, I think, is one of the most important things in his work and how that person relates to it," he says.

Inspired by later works of George Inness and the tonalist movement, Johnson's once-tight style quickly evolved into "more of an impression" of what he was painting, the artist says. Works like *Billy Boy*, a nearly monochromatic boat scene, share the same directness and economy of watercolor or India ink, while Johnson's interiors, rendered in brushy, rich color, land somewhere between Elmer Bischoff and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

"Less is more," Johnson says. "If it's not a little off in some way, it kind of loses its life, loses its effectiveness." While he could do it all, Johnson doesn't. Perhaps there's power in the stroke held back or the thing left unsaid.

Approximately 20 of Johnson's new paintings are on view at Principle Gallery in Alexandria from May 16 through June 9, with a reception on opening night from 6 to 8:30 p.m. ●

Principle Gallery 208 King Street • Alexandria, VA 22314 • (703) 739-9326 • www.principlegallery.com



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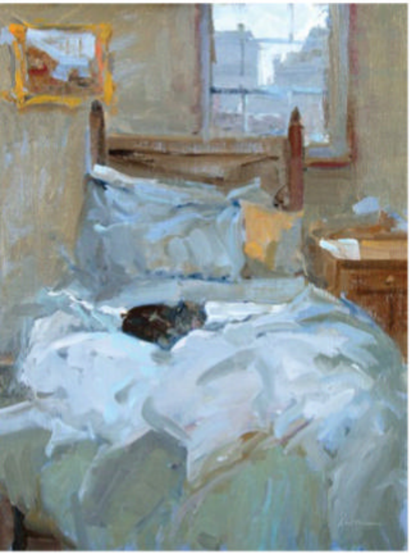
JULIETTE ARISTIDES & LORI PUTNAM

An Inspirational Exchange

By Vanessa Françoise Rothe



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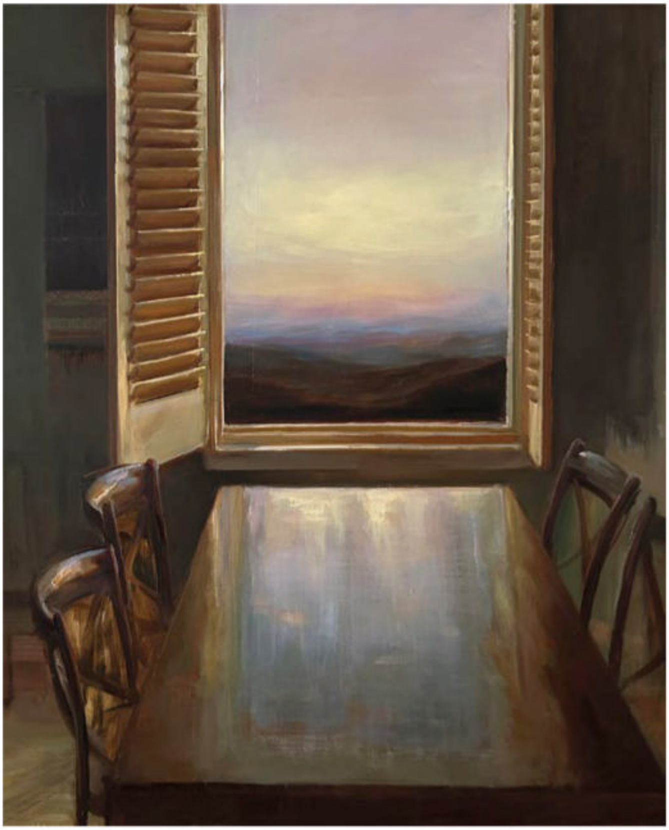

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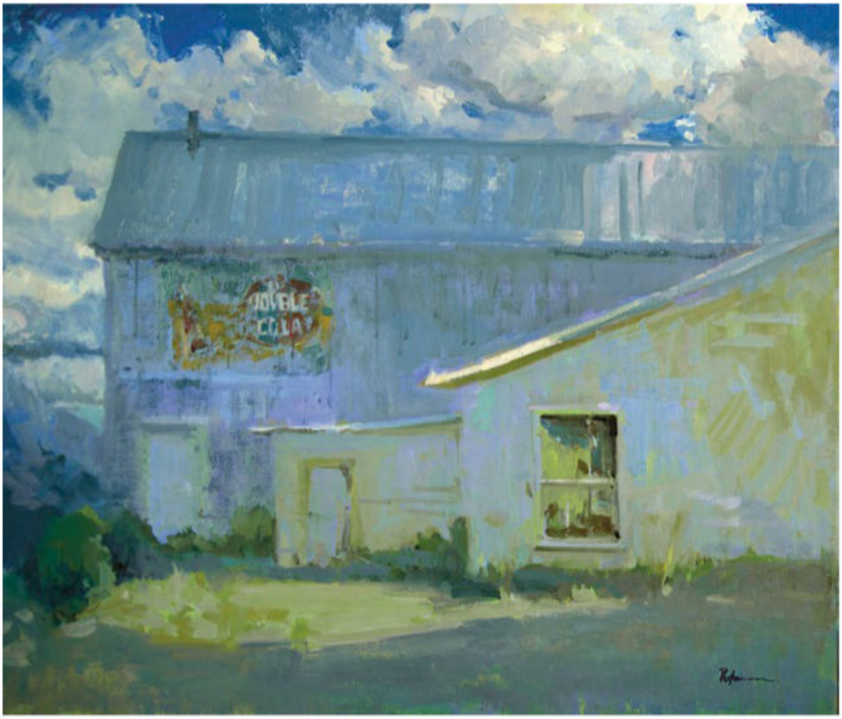
An exciting multi-faceted exhibition is on view at LeQuire Gallery in Nashville. *Inside/Out* features two of the gallery's award-winning artists, Juliette Aristides and Lori Putnam, who work in different genres and different styles, but decided to exchange subjects and inspiration for this particular show. Aristides, known for her exquisitely-refined realism, focuses on figurative scenes typically set inside her slightly mysterious house. Putnam, known primarily as a landscape painter, creates loose and colorful works in plein air, as well as larger-scale studio pieces.

Gallery director Elizabeth Cave notes, "While typically I wouldn't pair different genres within the same exhibition, the subject matter—Aristides' interiors and Putnam's exteriors—are considered signature themes for each artist, and combining them was an intriguing thought."

The artists started the exhibition with their usual subjects in mind however, while painting, they started to incorporate each other's subject matter. The exhibition will include Aristides' popular interiors in addition to new landscapes; while Putnam will present warm and colorful interiors of her home and studio. *Inside Out* is the result of the artists being tasked to adopt the other's subject. Cave says, "The assignment is just another day for the two 'all-stars,' highly regarded in their respective fields of impressionism and realism, but the end result is exciting for collectors and critics, considering they have never exhibited together."

Beyond the subject matter that unites Aristides and Putnam in this show, is the common use of lighting in their works. Both understand light and its importance in capturing a moment, and to draw the viewer in to discover more. In her painting *Greenwood*, Aristides uses the light streaming in from a window to highlight the colors of the sky reflected on the table. About her work in the show, Aristides says, "It is conventional wisdom that an artist should work within one genre, yet I create work based on my curiosity wherever it may lead me. These landscapes offer me a chance



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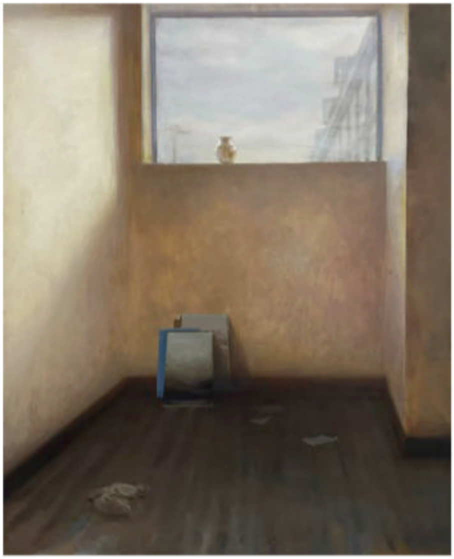
to explore the wider horizons of nature. Landscape is different from the figure on the surface, yet light hitting the forms of the body have some similarities. Light is beautiful in all its forms whether it's catching the curves of a neck, cascading down a face or raking across a wall. In this show, for the first time, I am turning my eyes to the source of light itself—the sun."

Putnam similarly shines light on both her exterior and interior subjects. In *Fisherman's Den* she captures light coming in a window and touching the bed. Putnam often travels to find inspiration and captures the character of the places she visits. "Everywhere I go, I look for the character of that place and what makes it different from any other place," says Putnam. "It is not just the architecture that makes the coasts of Sicily different than that of Maine. It is the color of the sun, the taste in the air and the sound of the sea. Clouds over a gray Tennessee barn are different than those on the Great Plains of Wyoming. Like the subtle greys in *Signs of Clearing*, I want viewers to know the difference." Putnam's paintings transport us around the world, from seaside villages to intimate interiors, to experience the colors, textures and sights from an artist's point of view. Together, the exhibition becomes a cohesive collection where visitors can admire various techniques and styles, lighting and subject matter, all within one room.

Inside/Out is on view through May 31, with an artist reception on April 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. ●

LeQuire Gallery 4304 Charlotte Avenue •
Nashville, TN 37209 • (615) 298-4611
www.lequiregallery.com



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1
Lori Putman,
Fisherman's Den, 2025,
oil on linen panel,
18 x 14"

2
Juliette Aristides,
Greenwood, 2025,
oil on panel, 28 x 22"

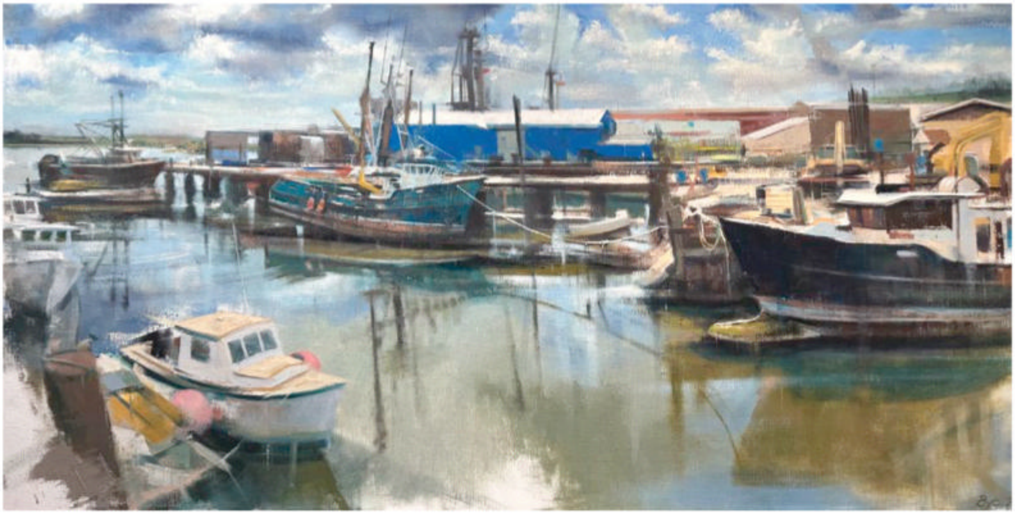
3
Lori Putman, *Signs of Clearing*, oil on linen panel, 24 x 30"

4
Juliette Aristides, *Studio Corner*, 2024, oil on panel, 28 x 22½"

UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / COVE STREET ARTS
5/29-7/12 Portland, ME

JEFF BYE

Impermanence



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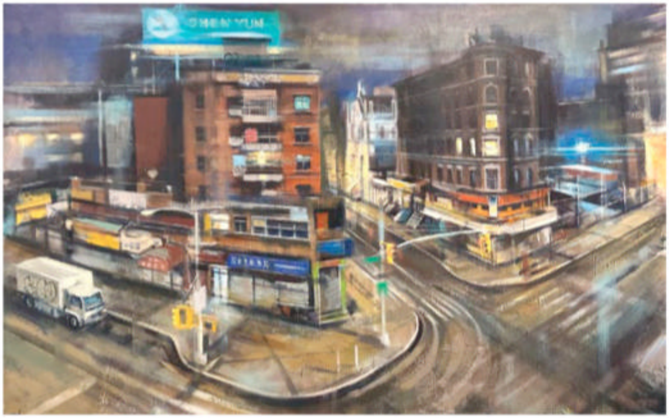
Jeff Bye's paintings of graffiti-tagged city streets, wrecked commercial buildings and abandoned docks ask viewers to reckon with the permanence of the places they visit. He paints locations that are sometimes 50 or 100 years old, and yet it's entirely possible his paintings will outlive them as cities grow, renovate and demolish.

Bye's newest show *Frayed Edges* will open May 29 at Cove Street Arts in Portland, Maine. The Pennsylvania painter will be showing as many as 15 new works, all of them depicting areas of major cities that are past their prime and yet still being used, for better or worse. While past shows have featured the interiors of cities, including in New York City, the new show also has works that venture to the water. Two examples are *Waterfront* and *Scout*, both showing an industrial waterway in Maine.



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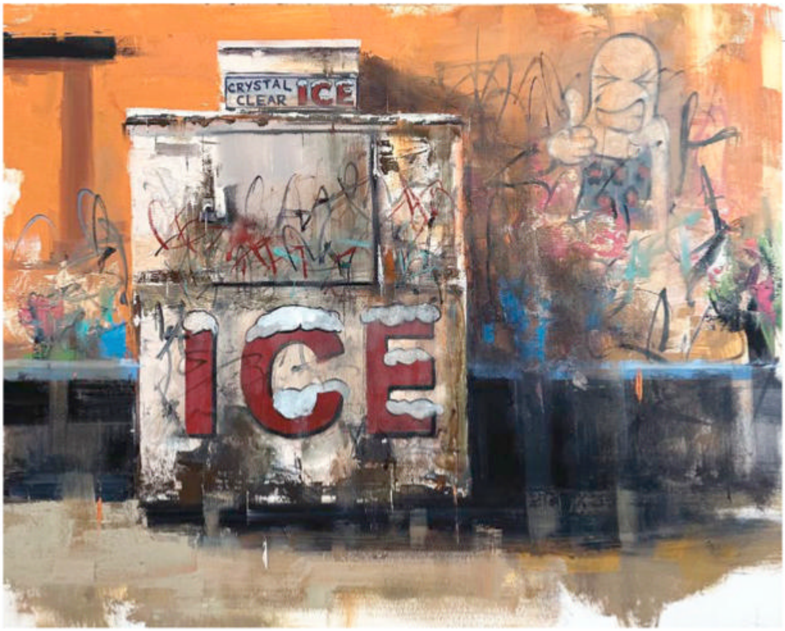
"Both paintings show areas that are near each other. In fact, you can see the big blue building in both paintings. Those docks have a randomness that I really enjoy. There are these vessels there just rotting in the water. Some are commercial boats and schooners," he says. "I went down there at every time of day just to see the patinas of the place and all the objects that you can see. There's everything from old fishing parts, machinery, Christmas decorations, old toys, garbage, ironwork of all kinds—all of it starts to look like abstract sculptures after awhile. The shapes can also be mysterious and wonderful, especially as the tides comes in and out."

He adds: "These places are mostly abandoned, and yet there are still signs of life."

For Bye, he's never sure if the subjects he paints will remain in two, 10 or 20 years after he's painted them. For all he knows,



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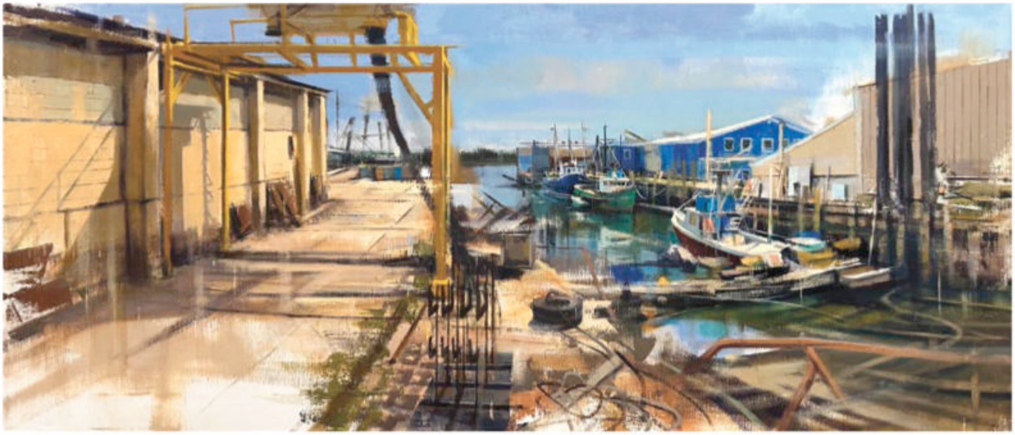
Scout, oil on linen, 24 x 48"

2
Pandemic, oil on canvas, 30 x 40"

3
Ice, oil on board, 16 x 20"

4
Waterfront, oil on linen, 24 x 56"



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they will still be there mostly untouched in 50 years. And yet, development could come through in two weeks and change everything. A microcosm of this theme plays out in *Ice*, which shows an ice machine outside a bodega. The machine and surrounding wall are covered in graffiti. Bye's painting freezes the scene in time, even as new graffiti is added within 24 hours of the artist's visit to the location. Time waits for nothing.

"These paintings are compelling not only for their vibrance, complexity and skill level, but also for an exceptionally strong sense of place," says gallery co-owner Kelley Lehr. "These works seem to transcend the visual sense, also evoking the sounds, smells and energy of the place depicted: the car horns, radios, sirens, human voices, and restaurant aromas typical of inner city neighborhoods full of run-down, often graffitied structures; the morose and musty stillness of the interior of a grand historic theater, abandoned to time's slow, relentless unraveling; the briny smell of salt and sea, the cries of gulls, and the sound of boats bobbing softly against a wooden wharf. Bye renders his subjects 'con amore,' contrasting blurry, soft focus, abstracted areas with others sharp and rich in detail. The effect is simultaneously edgy and romantic."

An opening reception will take place on May 29, from 5 to 7 p.m. The show continues through July 12. ●

Cove Street Arts 71 Cove Street, Unit A • Portland, ME 04101 • (207) 808-8911 • www.covestreetarts.com

UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / ANDREA SCHWARTZ GALLERY
5/14-6/19 San Francisco, CA

JOHN ROBERTS

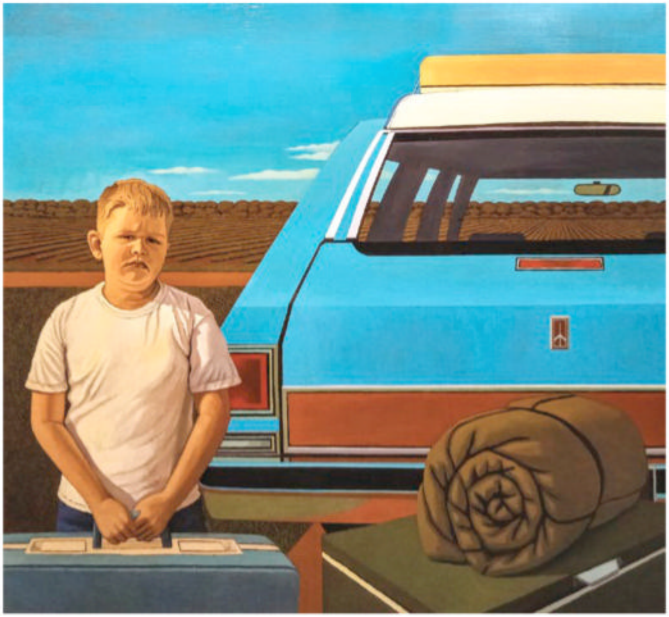
Family Road Trip

By John O'Hern

John Roberts went west in a hippie school bus when he was a boy, traveled west in his mind for a series of paintings, and is driving west from Tennessee to deliver the paintings to Andrea Schwartz Gallery in San Francisco. *Westward Through My Mind* opens May 14 with a reception from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and reamains on view at the gallery through June 19.

"I've always felt a strong pull to go west," Roberts explains. "For decades it's been my dream to load up my kids in our old 1987 Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser station wagon and drive to the Grand Canyon. We would fill a big cooler with cans of ice-cold soda and sandwich supplies. We'd eat breakfast at roadside cafes and camp where the threat of bears is real. John Denver in his wire spectacles and puffy vest coat would be our companion on the radio.

"This exhibition makes it possible for others to experience this geographical section of my mind in westward moving order," he continues. "Each painting was a complete image in my head before I ever started working on it. My youngest son, Moses, is the star of the show. He is 9 years old, always around when I need a reference



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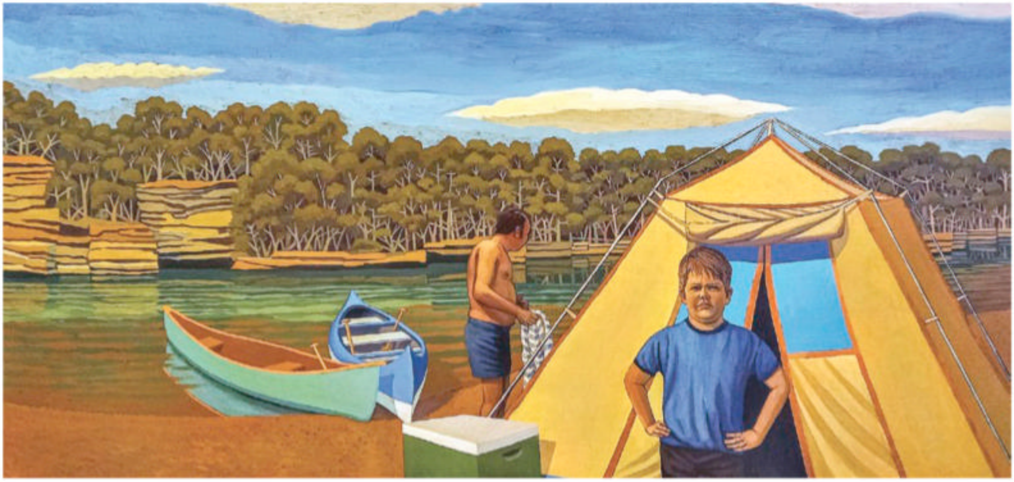

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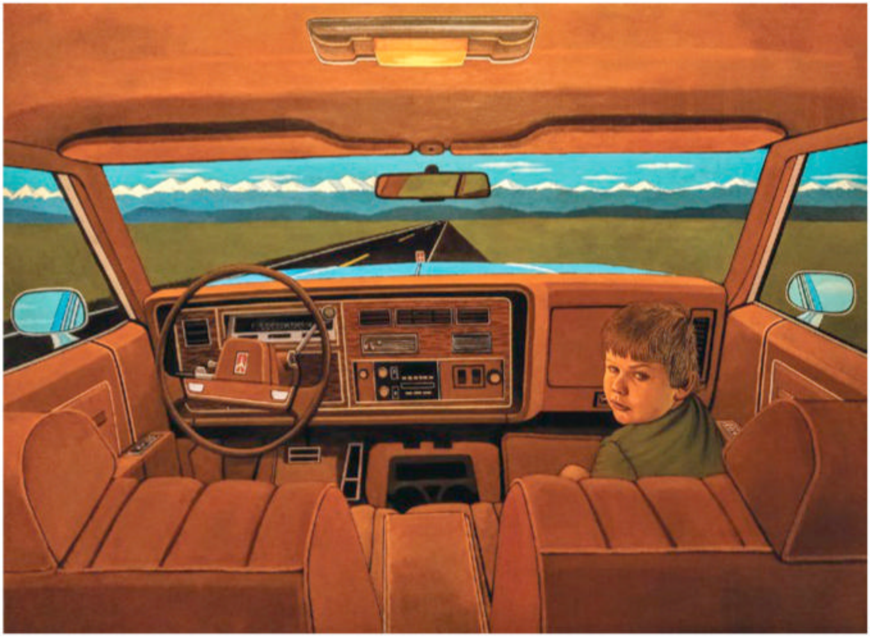

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1
Heading West, oil and acrylic on panel, 36 x 36"

2
Arkansas Float, oil and acrylic on panel, 24 x 48"

3
Bad Alternator, Eastern Colorado, oil and acrylic on wood panel, 36 x 48"

4
Southern California Café Stop, oil and acrylic on panel, 24 x 48"

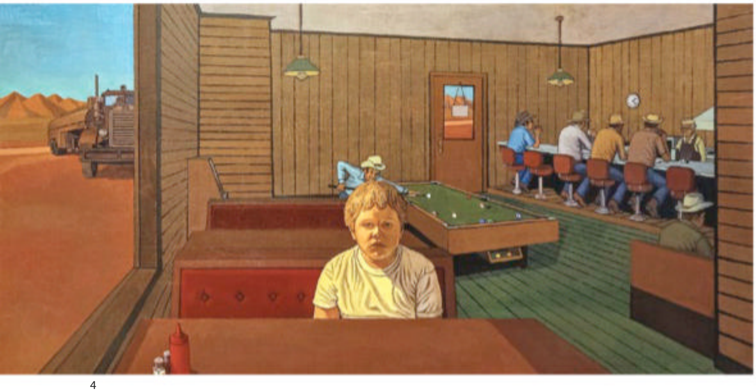
photo, and we are a lot alike."

Roberts and his family live on a farm that has been in his family since the early 19th century, rich with history and family memorabilia including black and white photographs that become colorful paintings like enlarged Polaroid prints or Kodachrome slides. "I'll paint from the photograph," he says, "and make up the rest." There is a loving admiration in the paintings for the relatives who came before him and, in the case of *Westward Through My Mind*, his young son, Moses. In *Bad Alternator, Eastern Colorado*, Moses sits questioningly in the idled Oldsmobile with the temporarily unreachable mountains far ahead on the seemingly endless road.

After receiving his MFA in drawing and painting from the University of Arkansas in 2000, Roberts began working as a tombstone etcher, a job he still has—in the morning. He paints in the afternoon.

"When I turned 45," he relates, "I realized I had something to say, stories to tell. It was time. I think about everyone's life stories, about who I am and what I know." As a composer making recordings as "Skyway 7," a former missionary who raises money for children in India who have been rescued from forced labor, a husband and father of eight living within the history of either generations of his family, he has a lot to tell.

Meanwhile, he says, "I'm loading up my van with a cooler full of drinks and sandwiches, and my 16-year-old son, Daniel. We will take turns driving on our way from Tennessee to California to deliver the paintings in this show. We plan to stay in old motels, listen to podcasts about mountain men, and stop for every bear and each magnificent new vista." ●



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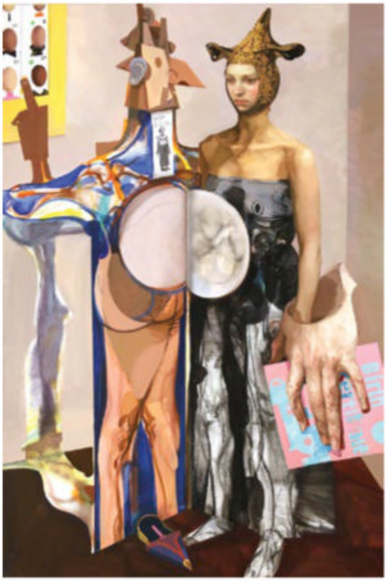
Andrea Schwartz Gallery 545 4th Street
San Francisco, CA 94107 • (415) 495-2090
www.asgallery.com

The Cycle Continues

The last Bennett Prize winner and this year's finalists are at the center of two new exhibitions at Muskegon Museum of Art By Sarah Gianelli



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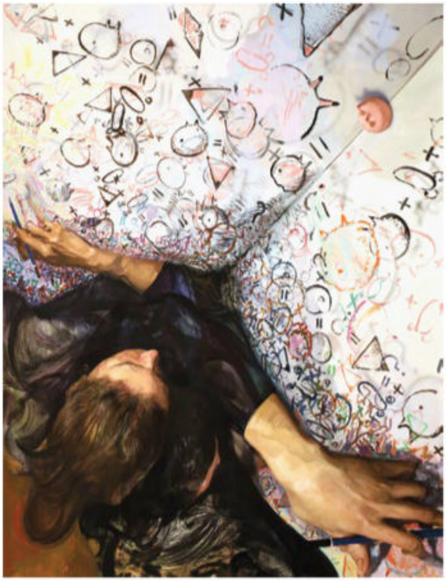

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1
Shiqing Deng, *Selection*, 2024, oil on linen, 66 x 44". Courtesy of C+N Gallery CANEPANERI (Milan-Genoa, Italy) & Gian Enzo SPERONE (Sent, Switzerland).

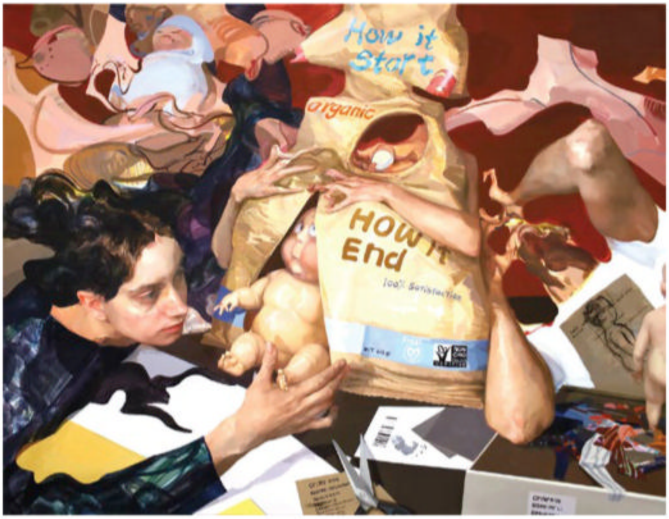
2
Shiqing Deng, *Unsolved*, 2024, oil on linen, 49 x 39". Courtesy of C+N Gallery CANEPANERI (Milan-Genoa, Italy) & Gian Enzo SPERONE (Sent, Switzerland).

3
Shiqing Deng, *Baby Maker*, 2024, oil on linen, 40 x 60"

4
Shiqing Deng, *Pose*, 2024, oil on linen, 40 x 30"

The winner of the fourth round of the $50,000 biennial Bennett Prize (and the recipient of an additional $10,000 award) will be announced at Michigan's newly-expanded Muskegon Museum of Art on May 15, coinciding with the opening of two related exhibitions. *Rising Voices 4: The Bennett Prize for Women Figurative Realist Painters* will feature approximately 30 paintings by the 2025 Bennett Prize finalists; and will be accompanied by a solo show of eight paintings by 2023 winner, Shiqing (Demo) Deng.

The Bennett Prize was established by philanthropists and art collectors Steven Bennett and Dr. Elaine Melotti Schmidt to propel the careers of women painters and to promote figurative realism. On an individual level, the funding often enables the recipient to devote more time to their craft. Titled *Shiqing Deng: The Cost of Life*, the exhibition is an opportunity for



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the artist to share the body of work she has produced since receiving the prize two years ago.

I had last spoken to Deng in August 2023 and wanted to know how the prize had impacted her life and work since. “I feel very free to paint without worry about the art market,” she says. “I can explore some interesting subject [matter] which might not [appeal to] a lot of audiences.” In addition to creative freedom, another huge win, and one the China-born artist was hoping the prize would facilitate, was securing an EB-1A visa for exemplary individuals in a number of fields, including the arts, carving a clear path toward permanent residency in the United States.

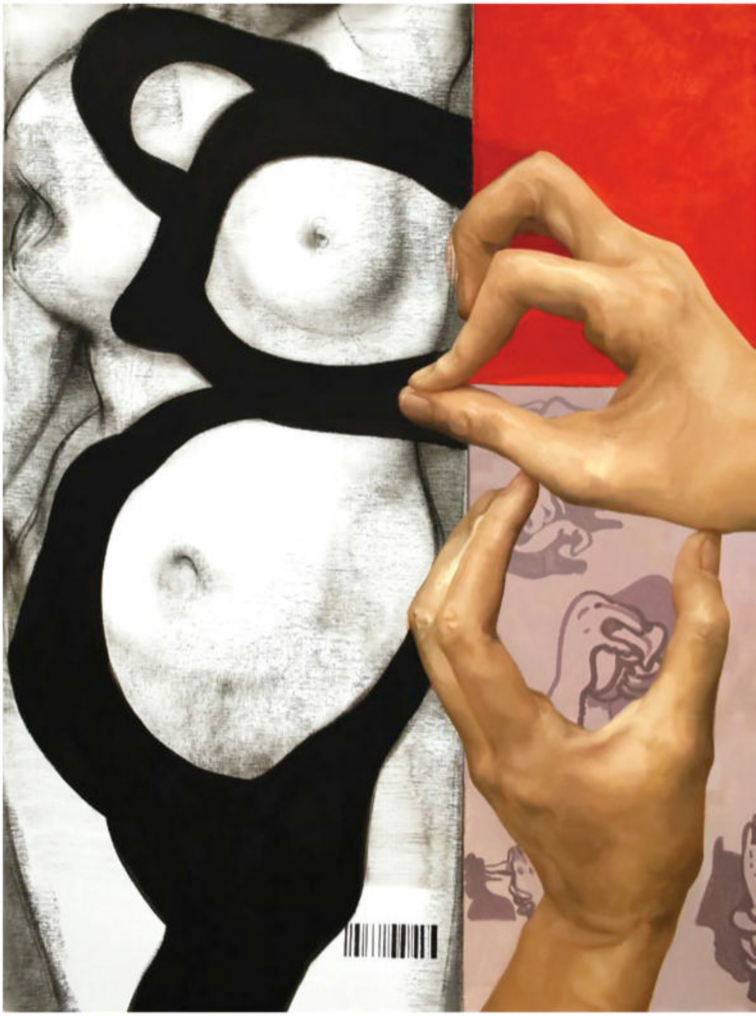
In her latest series, Deng explores the complexities of surrogacy. “I was inspired to delve into this theme after watching a documentary on YouTube, where they interviewed a Chinese individual who runs a surrogacy company in the U.S.,” says Deng. “He shared many shocking details about the industry that I could never have imagined. After finishing the documentary, I felt so astounded that I had to express my thoughts through painting.” In Deng’s typical style, she approaches darker subject matter with humor and sarcasm.

For instance, in *Baby Maker*, one of the artist’s personal favorites, a woman interacting with a packaged baby underscores the transactional nature of surrogacy. The labels “How it Start” and “How it End” point to the commodification of life, where the creation and delivery of a child are viewed through a commercial lens.

“I love the idea that delivering a baby is like opening a snack package,” says Deng. “It’s like a commercial. A lot of people told me it’s a very weird and disturbing painting [which] I took as a compliment.”

Deng’s solo show *The Cost of Life* and *Rising Voices 4* open on May 15 with a reception and awards ceremony (at which the winner of the 2025 Bennett Prize will be announced) from 5 to 8 p.m. The exhibits will remain on view at Muskegon Museum of Art through August 24, after which it will travel to the Arnot Art Museum in Elmira, New York; Customs House and Cultural Center in Charlottesville, Tennessee; the Bo Bartlett Center in Columbus, Georgia; and Studio Incamminati in Philadelphia. The tour concludes in July 2027.

To learn more about the 2025 Bennett Prize finalists in *Rising Voices 4*, see our feature in the February issue of *American Art Collector* or visit www.thebennettprize.org.



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SHIQING DENG: THE COST OF LIFE

Rising Voices 4: The Bennett Prize for Women Figurative Realist Painters

May 15-August 24, 2025

Muskegon Museum of Art
296 W. Webster Avenue, Muskegon, MI 49440
(231) 720-2570, www.muskegonartmuseum.org

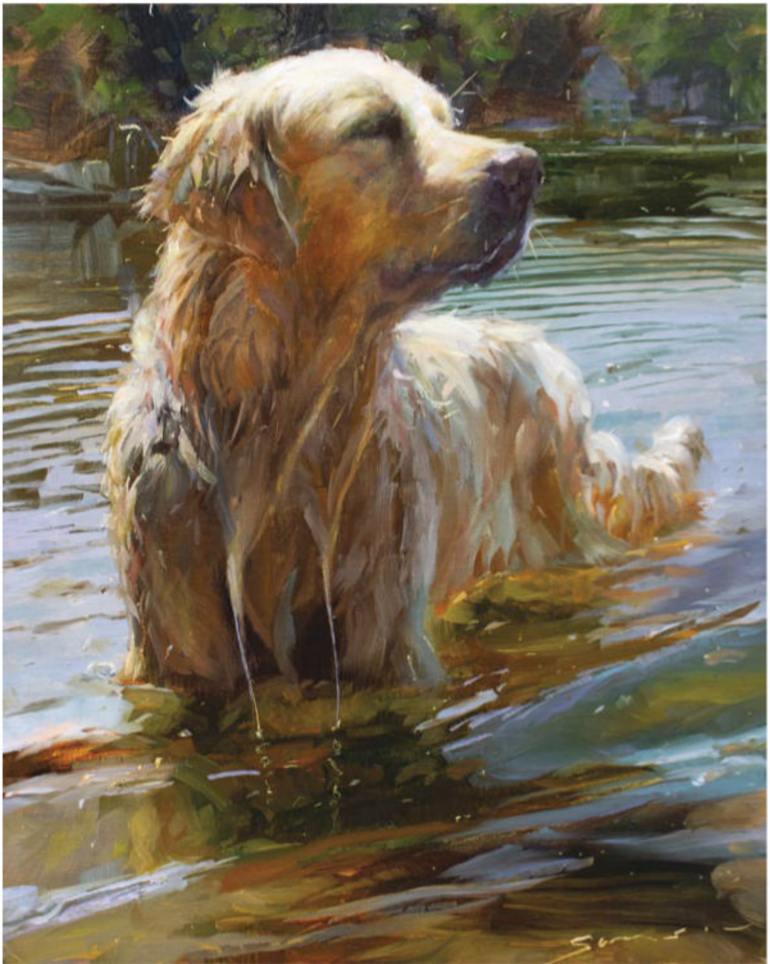
Small Works, Big Show

The National Oil & Acrylic Painters' Society presents its annual small works exhibition.

Featuring small works by member artists from around the country and globe, the National Oil & Acrylic Painters' Society (NOAPS) presents the 8th annual *Best of America Small Works International Juried Exhibition*. This year, the juried show, comprising 120 paintings of 320 square inches or less, will be hosted by Eisele Gallery in Cincinnati.

"Cincinnati has a thriving, exciting art community and we wanted to take advantage of this beautiful city," says NOAPS president Pat Tribastone. "We have had exhibitions all around the U.S., from the East Coast to Montana, Florida to Santa Fe! We love moving our shows around the country to provide our artists with exhibition opportunities and find collectors all over the country."

The National Oil & Acrylic Painters' Society is a growing organization of about 1,500 members from around the country, Canada and the world. The group mounts five exhibitions per year: three online and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1
James Swanson, *The Water Guardian*, oil on canvas, 20 x 16". Private collection.

2
The 2024 reception at Sugarman Peterson Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

3
Blair Atherholt, *Opening Day*, oil, 12 x 12"

4
Tom Lockhart, *Sundown on the Wintry Back*, oil on linen panel, 8 x 10"

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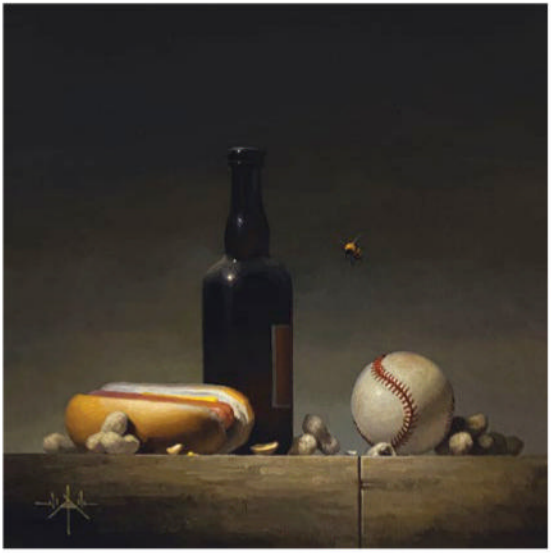
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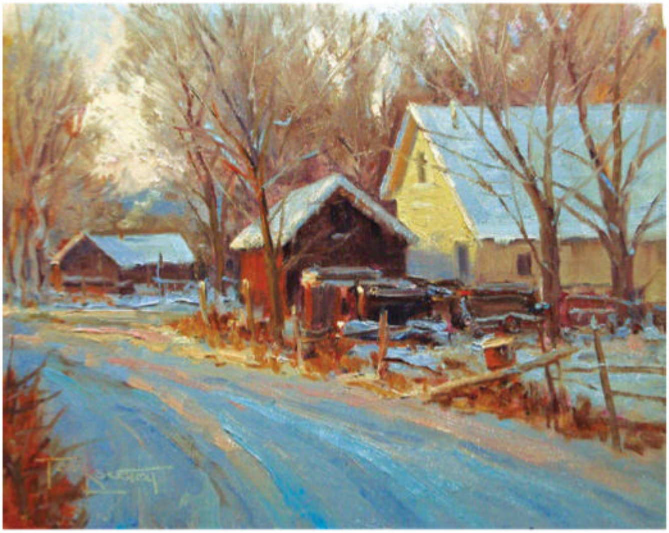
two gallery exhibits. Their annual *Best of America Small Works International Juried Exhibition* offers collectors the opportunity to purchase works by significant artists at a lower price point than at other NOAPS shows.

More than $30,000 in cash and sponsor prizes will be presented at the awards reception on May 9 at the National Exemplar restaurant at the Mariemont Inn. Last year's winner of the $3,000 Best in Show award went to James Swanson for his oil *Water Guardian*. Other highlights of the 2024 event included Tom Lockhart's *Sundown on the Wintry Back*, which won Best Use of Light and Color, and second place winner Blair Atherholt's *Opening Day*.

The exhibition will also be preceded by a plein air competition titled *Cincy in the Spring* on May 7 and 8, with a sale of the freshly painted works on May 9. Other events include a gallery talk by NOAPS Master Artist Hebe Brooks and Pat Tribastone on Thursday, May 8, at 10 a.m., and a group trip to the Cincinnati Art Museum that afternoon. All events are free and open to the public.

"Spring is a wonderful time in Cincinnati, and the weather is perfect for plein air painting," says Tribastone. "The trails and parks are coming alive, and the flowers are in full bloom after a winter rest!"

Visit www.noaps.org for additional details. ●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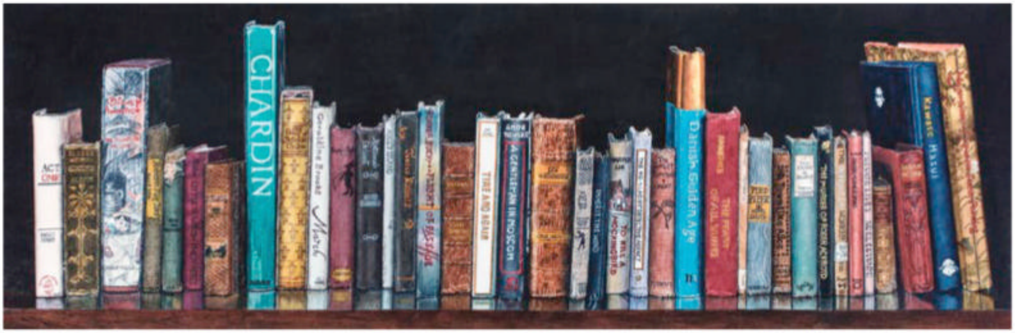
BEST OF AMERICA SMALL WORKS INTERNATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION

May 9-31, 2025

Eisele Gallery
6936 Madisonville Road, Cincinnati, OH 45227
membership@noaps.org, www.noaps.org

Easy Access

American Artists Professional League launches its online Spring members' show.



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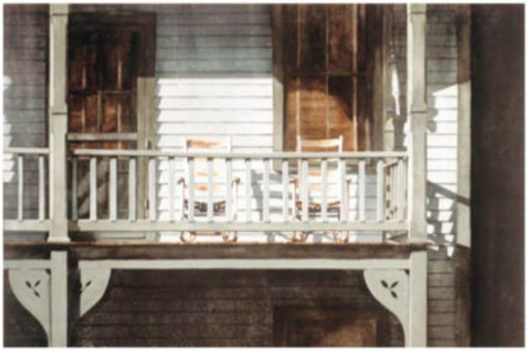

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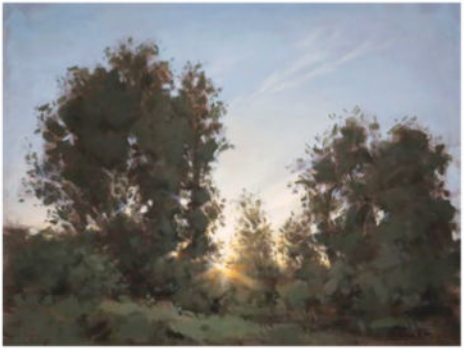

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On May 3, the American Artists Professional League's annual juried members' online exhibition goes live and will remain on the organization's website through July 12. The digital showcase features a curated selection of representational art by AAPL members, juried in by Signature Member, Margret Short, an accomplished master oil painter.

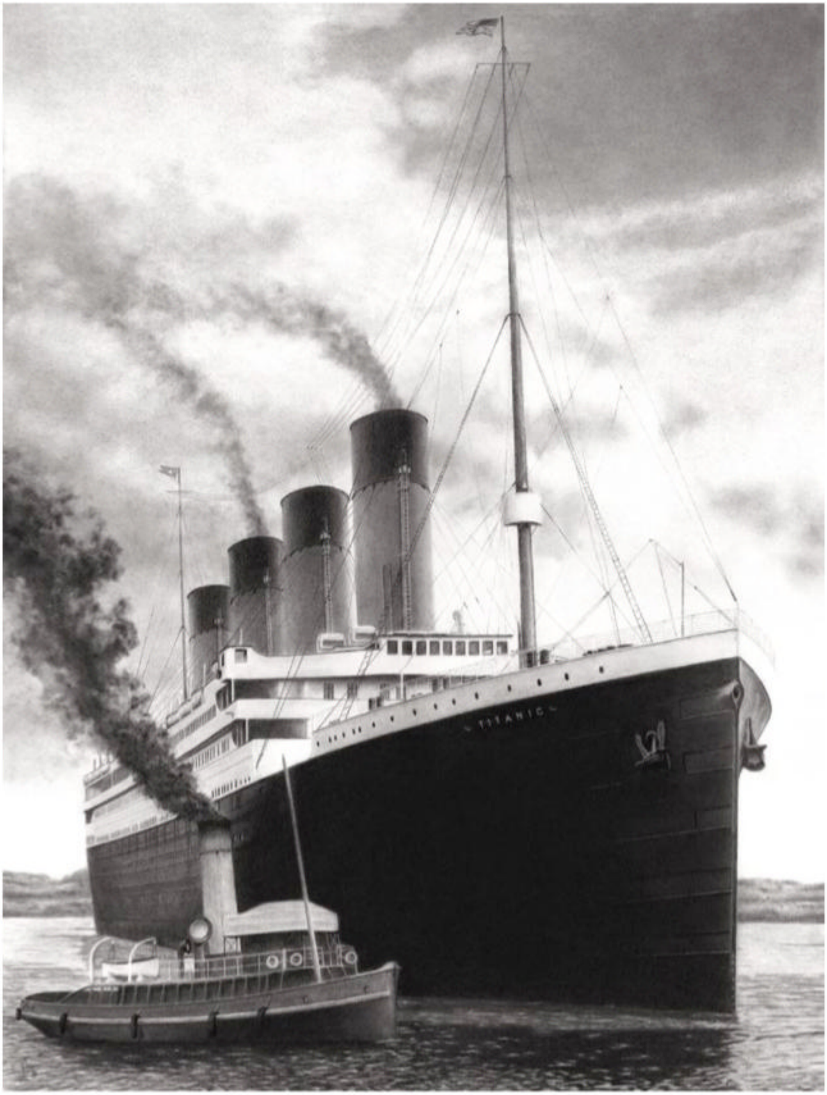
"This show is exclusively for our Elected Artist Members, Signature Members, Fellow Members and Life Members," says AAPL director of membership Deborah Gersony. "This year, we are proud to showcase an impressive array of high-quality work across multiple mediums, including oil, acrylic, water media, graphite and sculpture. Each submission is carefully evaluated by our board of directors. Juror of awards Margret Short, whose exceptional eye for color and detail in her still life and floral studies, as well as her long-standing dedication to the arts, make her an invaluable asset to this year's exhibition."

Monetary prizes will be awarded for first and second place in the categories of oil, acrylic, water media, graphite and sculpture. Works will be evaluated based on technical skill, mastery of the medium and the emotional impact of the piece.

"While nothing can replace the experience of viewing artwork in person, this online show, showcasing high-quality works, presents a unique opportunity for a much broader audience to engage with the exhibition," adds Gersony. "For artists, the savings on packing and shipping are also a significant benefit!"

Among the established artists whose work has been juried into AAPL's *Spring Members Online Show*, include Andy Eccleshall, Arline Mann, Thomas Torak, Gregory DiNapoli, Carolyn Latanision and many more.

The show is viewable at www.aaplinc.org, where many works are for sale, and purchases can be made on the website's Artwork Store. Sold work will be



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1
Arline Mann, *All Those Worlds*, watercolor, 16½ x 49½"

2
Carolyn Latanision, *End of Summer, Monhonk*, watercolor, 21 x 29"

3
Thomas Torak, *Daybreak*, oil on linen, 18 x 24"

4
Gregory DiNapoli, *Southampton*, graphite, 22 x 17"

shipped directly from the artist's studio to the collector. A digital catalog, which can be downloaded from the AAPL website, accompanies the exhibition, allowing collectors to revisit their favorite pieces and artists at their leisure.

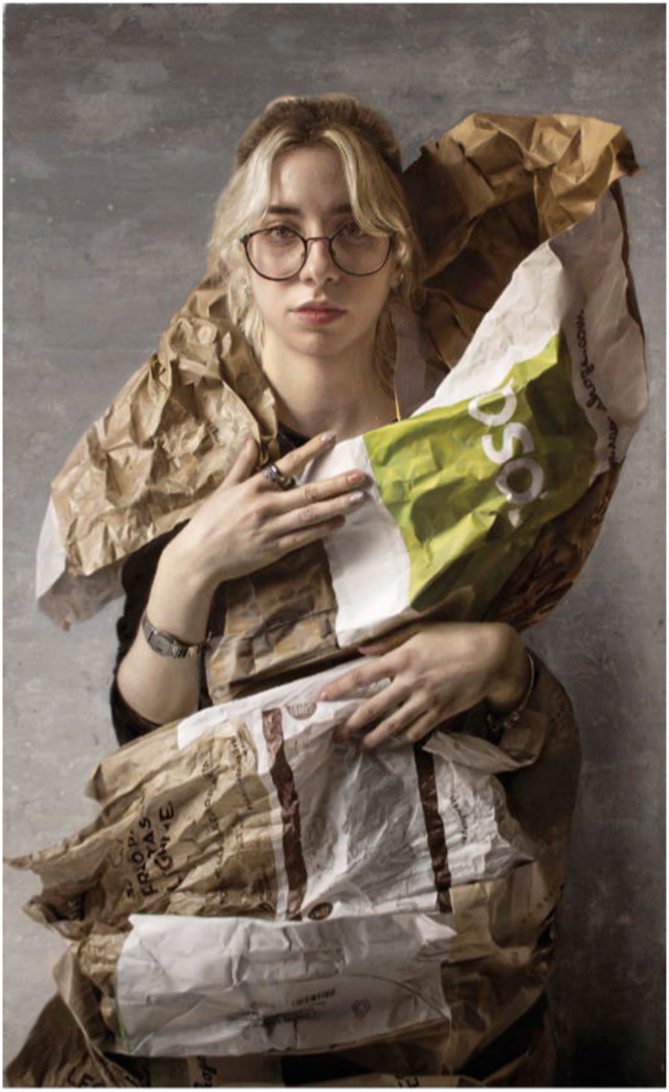
"The *Spring Members Online Show* of artworks in the field of traditional realism reaches a worldwide audience of artists and collectors," says Gersony. "For several years now it has been an important event for our elected artists, signature, fellow and life members to exhibit and sell their work." ●

SPRING MEMBERS ONLINE SHOW

May 3-July 12, 2025
American Artists Professional League
Online, www.aaplinc.org

A Place to Grow

The Portrait Society of America hosts its 27th annual Art of the Portrait Conference in Reston, Virginia.



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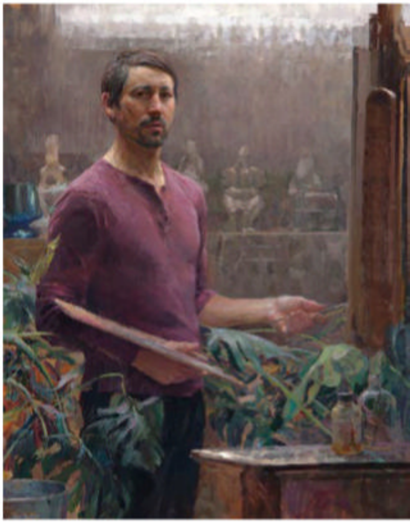
Each spring, leading professional artists, aspiring artists, art suppliers, collectors and enthusiasts all flock to the *Art of the Portrait Conference*, hosted by the Portrait Society of America. This year's conference, which takes place in the Washington, D.C. area, has a schedule packed with workshops, demonstrations and compelling panel discussions with esteemed Portrait Society faculty members like Michelle Dunaway, Robert Liberace, Oliver Sin, Paul Newton, Ruth Fitton, Adrienne Stein, Shane Wolf, Rose Frantzen and many others.

The Portrait Society recently celebrated its 27th anniversary in February. "Since its formation, I have served as the CEO, and I take immense pride in what we've accomplished and remain deeply committed to the enduring importance of portraiture," says Christine Egnoski, executive director. "In a world dominated by digital photography, I believe the tradition of portrait painting remains a dynamic and irreplaceable art form and having a non-profit



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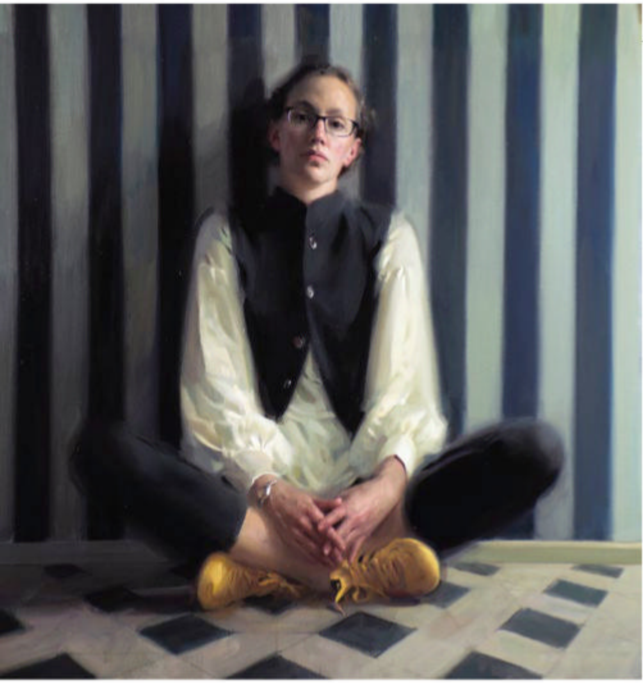
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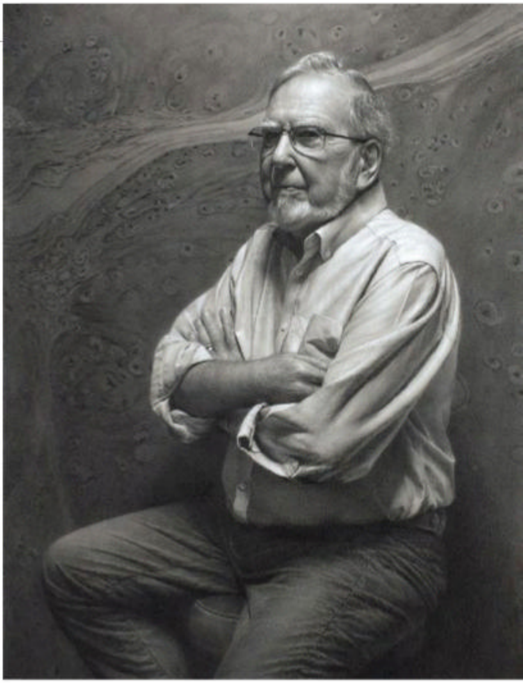
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organization that supports this tradition is vitally important."

An atmosphere of encouragement and a genuine love of traditional portraiture permeates every aspect of the conference. And while it focuses primarily on the growth and advancement of the artist community, there is an abundance of opportunities for collectors to acquire original artworks as well.

The four-day event will exhibit the top 20 finalists of the Portrait Society's *International Portrait Competition*, which is judged on site. This exhibition, located at the Hyatt Regency Reston, is open to the public for the entire duration of the conference. Finalists include Anna Rose Bain, Frances Bell, Scott Burdick, Roberto Gammone, Pavel Sokov, Timothy Rees, Laura Arenson and more. Cash and prizes for the winners of the International Portrait Competition make up over $162,000, including a $50,000 cash award for the Grand Prize, all of which are announced during the Awards Gala and Banquet on Saturday, May 10.

"One of the most exciting and fast-paced events is the 6-by-9 Mystery Art Sale, where attendees can purchase small, original works of art created by a variety of talented artists," says Egnoski. "The unique twist? The artists' names are kept secret until after the purchase, allowing buyers to make their purchase based purely on their love for the artwork rather than the name behind it. This creates an element of surprise and discovery, making each acquisition a thrilling experience."

Another highlight is the Silent Auction, featuring paintings created during the Thursday evening "Face Off," in which 18 artists demonstrate in a variety of mediums including oil, watercolor, charcoal, egg tempera and clay. Artists participating in the 2025 Face Off include Michael Bergt, Ali Cavanaugh, Quang Ho, Jeffrey Larson, Huihan Liu, Kevin Macpherson, Dominique Medici, Timothy Rees, Mario Robinson and Daniel Sprick, to name a few.

Both the Silent Auction and 6-by-9 Mystery Art Sale are open to the public.

"The available works showcase the mastery of 18 renowned portrait artists, making this an excellent opportunity to invest in exceptional artwork," Egnoski adds. "Both events not only provide a chance to build a fine art collection, but since the funds collected support the Portrait Society's scholarship program, buyers are also directly contributing to the advancement and encouragement of portrait artists, ensuring the continued growth of this important artistic tradition."

The 2025 *Art of the Portrait Conference* takes place May 8 to 11. ●

ART OF THE PORTRAIT CONFERENCE

May 8-11, 2025
Hyatt Regency Reston
1800 Presidents Street, Reston, VA 20190, www.portraitsociety.org

1
Roberto Gammone, *Baroque Recycling*, oil on canvas, 35.4 x 21.6". 2025 International Portrait Competition finalist.

2
Palden Hamilton, *Self Portrait at 45*, oil, 48 x 38". 2025 International Portrait Competition finalist.

3
Frances Bell, *Yellow Trainers*, oil on canvas, 37½ x 35½". 2025 International Portrait Competition finalist.

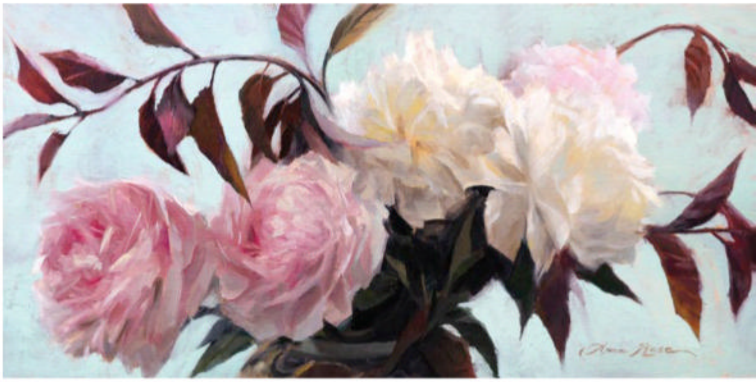
4
David Jamieson, *Pathologist - Portrait of Dr. Maurice Jamieson*, graphite, carbon black, pastel and ink wash on paper, 26 x 20". 2025 International Portrait Competition finalist.

Art with Heart

The 2025 Governor's Art Show & Sale features the work of top Colorado artists with all sales going to charity.

Combining excellence in art with the "positive impact of guided philanthropy," the *Governor's Art Show & Sale* preps for the 34th edition. Held at the Loveland Museum in Loveland, Colorado, the event upholds its tradition of supporting community causes through the Loveland and Thompson Valley Rotary clubs, endorsed by the Governor of Colorado, and features works of art by Colorado's finest artists.

"The show's mission is 'Art with Heart,'" says show director Ruth Scott, "[and] features a juried collection of outstanding works by over 60 masterful Colorado artists, [four pieces of work per artist], in a wide variety of mediums, artistic techniques and styles."



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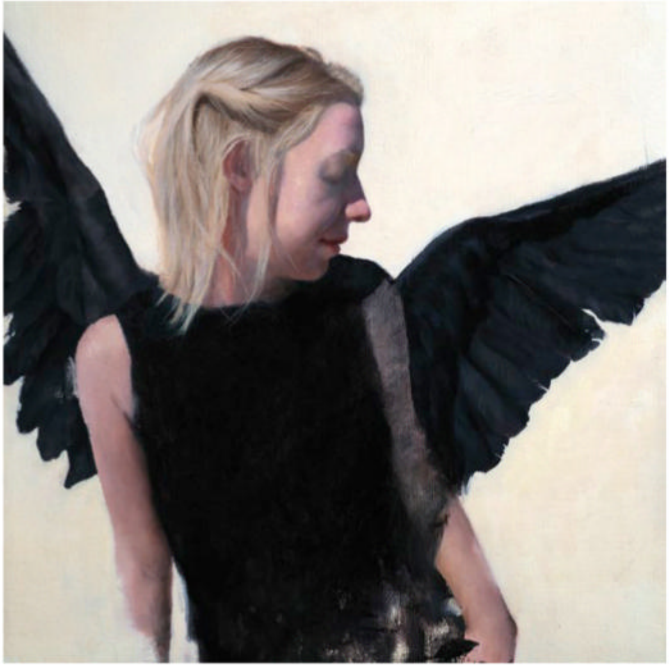

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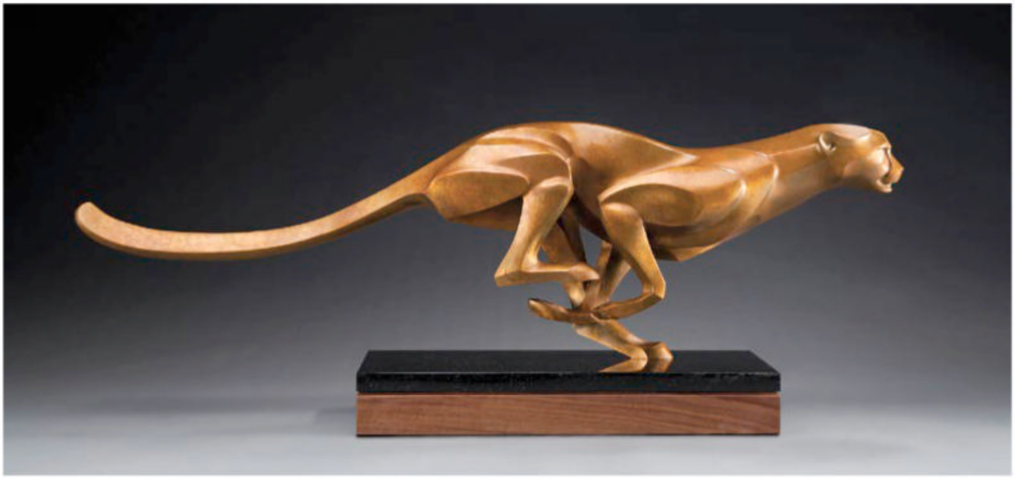
In addition to the juried artists, the event features one artist as its Legacy Artist—"an artist who has participated in past shows and has been a strong advocate for the arts," says Scott. This year's Legacy Artist is Rosetta, known for her bronze animal sculptures. Also, returning to the show, will be the 2024 Best of Show recipient, Diego Glazer.

Collector's will find strong artwork examples like the floral piece by Anna Rose Bain titled *Ruth's Peonies*—titled after the show director, Ruth Scott. "She arranged for several of us artists to have a paint-out in the museum gallery while the show was going on last year, and she set up this gorgeous bouquet with peonies from her own garden," says Bain. "While we also had a model to paint from, I was so drawn to the peonies that I started a second painting that day. Painting these flowers proved to be challenging, as the gallery had multiple light sources and backgrounds, depending on where you were standing in front of the setup. Months later, I worked on completing the painting in my studio and continued adjusting and arranging the elements to make the painting feel both graphic and poetic overall."

Besides florals, Bain is also known for her depictions of her children, friends, places she visits and environments where she



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feels most at home. "Movement and color are what excite me the most in a painting, and if there's a strong emotional pull, even better," the artist explains. "It's also important to me that my work reflects my values and worldview, while staying relevant to whatever stage I'm at in my life."

Additional highlights at the show include the work of figurative and portrait artist, Jen Starling. For her show piece *Imperfect Angel*, she shares, "[This painting] is the second in a series. The 'dark angel' idea began with a different painting and has held my interest. The original painting was almost finished when I had a flash vision of the subject with dark wings. It is hard to say what subconscious imagery contributes to such a vision, but it's likely that it had to do with my boyfriend's (artist Daniel Sprick) large taxidermy raven. I love the ethereal quality of angel imagery, but the more traditional use of white wings does not match my aesthetic preferences. I'm drawn to imagery with a slightly haunting quality. Therefore, the raven wings were a perfect fit."

The event kicks off on May 2 with the ticketed Opening Night Gala from 5 to 8 p.m. During the run of the show, from May 3 through June 14, there will be an artist meet and greet from 2 to 4 p.m. each Saturday. The public is encouraged to see the artworks in person at the Loveland Museum or view them online at www.governorsartshow.org. ●

4

1
Anna Rose Bain, *Ruth's Peonies*, oil, 8 x 16"

2
Jen Starling, *Imperfect Angel*, oil, 24 x 24"

3
Rosetta, *Running Cheetah*, bronze, 3 x 13"

4
Artists and collectors converse at the 2024 Meet and Greet.

GOVERNOR'S ART SHOW & SALE

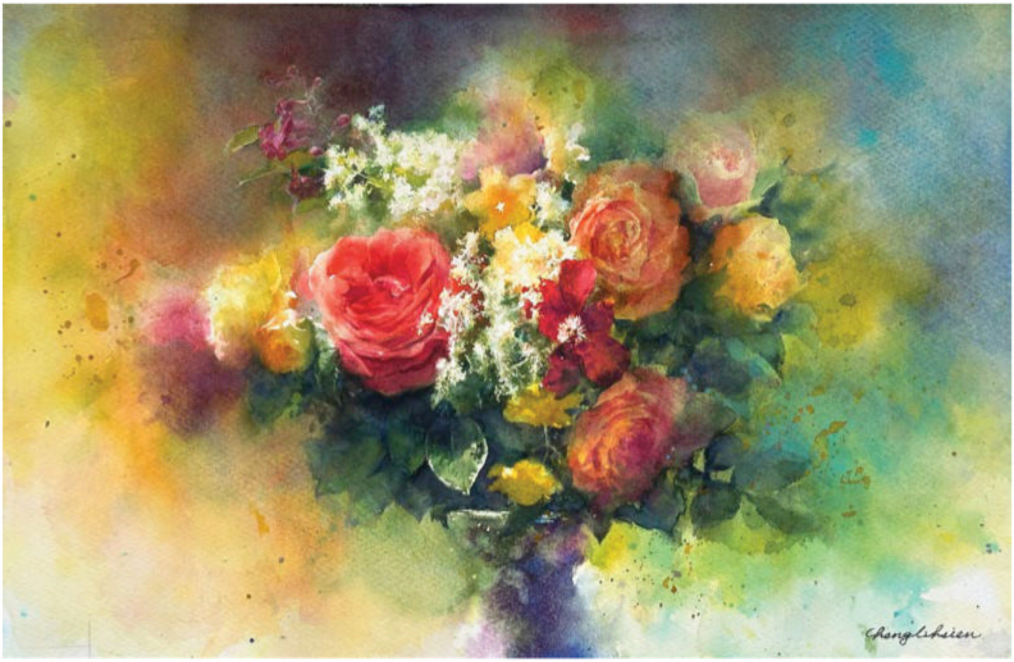
May 3-June 14, 2025
Loveland Museum
503 N. Lincoln Avenue, Loveland, CO 80537
(970) 670-0035, www.governorsartshow.org

international artist
AWARD WINNER

LI HSIEN CHENG
Taichung, Taiwan • 980529@gmail.com

Flower Dance

Cheng was the Second Prize Winner in International Artist magazine's Challenge No. 143 Cityscapes.



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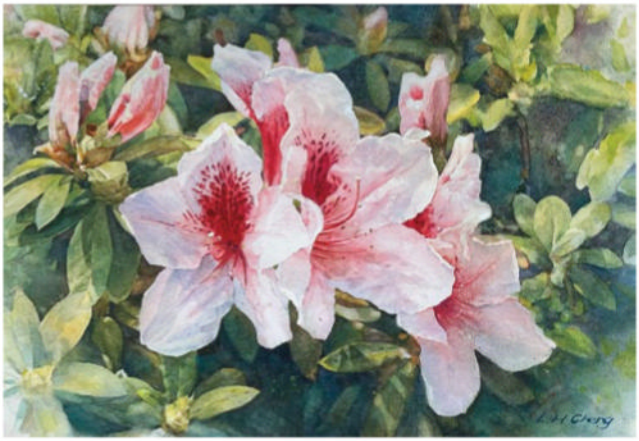
Watercolorist Li Hsien Cheng was born and currently lives in Taiwan. A high school teacher who teaches advertising design, Cheng loves the effect that color and light have on people's emotions. "I want to represent them through my painting," she says. "When I engage in painting, it transcends mere copying. It's a profound expression of my inner thoughts and emotions. It is a journey of self discovery, a means to find and truly see myself. Each artwork I create captures different facets of my life, conveyed through the interplay of light, colors, and the contrasts of brightness and darkness."

Cheng is particularly inspired by a poignant quote from the Japanese artist Yoshitomo Nara: "There are as many things I want to try as there are mountains, and my desires are endless. But the most important thing is to constantly reflect on what you truly wish to pursue."

"In response to this, I find that my deepest



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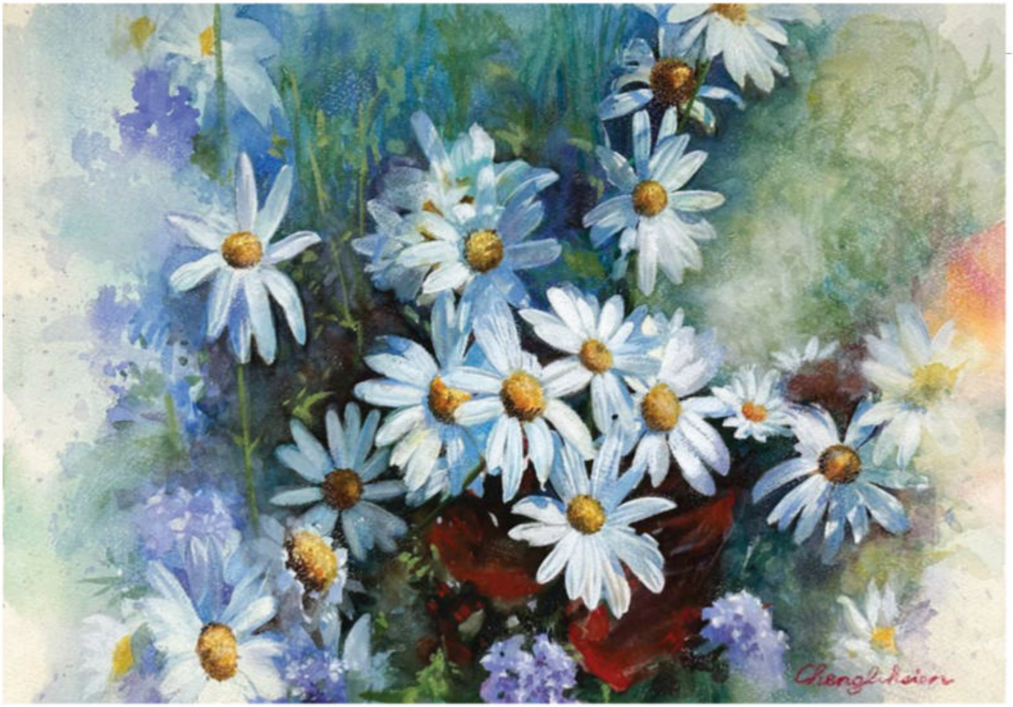

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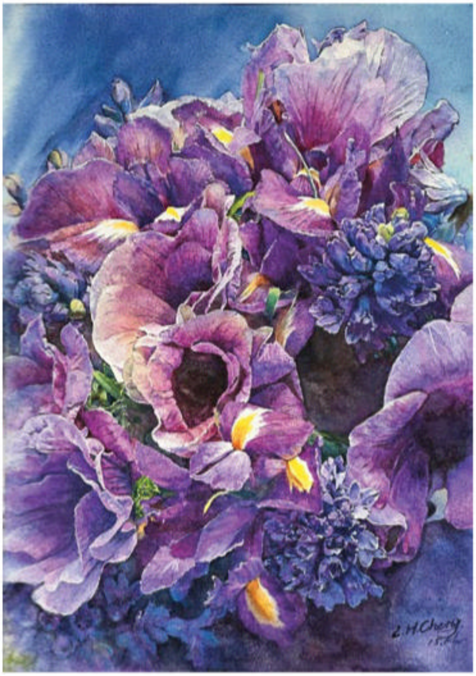

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aspiration lies in the creative process itself," Cheng continues. "It allows me to experience the joy and elation within my heart, and it is my sincere hope that this beauty resonates with the world, fostering a dialogue with each observer."

The artist creates watercolor florals that bleed vibrant splashes of color. Her painting *The Flora Dance* depicts a bouquet bursting with roses and other blooms in shades of coral, gold and magenta. "This artwork is inspired by the unique atmosphere of dawn. The combination of colors and brushstrokes aims to capture the fleeting light and shadows, allowing viewers to feel the hope of a new day and the spiral of life, evoking inner peace and imagination," says Cheng.

In *The Dream Of Purple*, the artist captures a medley of different flowers in various shades of lilac, lavender and violet. A nearly monochromatic palette, the background is a deep violet-blue.

She says, "In the artwork, the bright light and shadow dance upon the sheer petals, shimmering from deep violet to subtly sweet lavender, creating a dream-like atmosphere. The piece is not only a reproduction of images but also a profound reflection on life and beauty."

Explore more artwork from Cheng by searching "Cheng Li Hsien" on Instagram. ●

1
The Flora Dance,
watercolor

2
The Spring Smiling,
watercolor

3
The Flora Smiling
watercolor

4
The Dream of Purple,
watercolor

PATSY LINDAMOOD
Huntsville, TX • lindamood@lindamoodart.com • www.lindamoodart.com

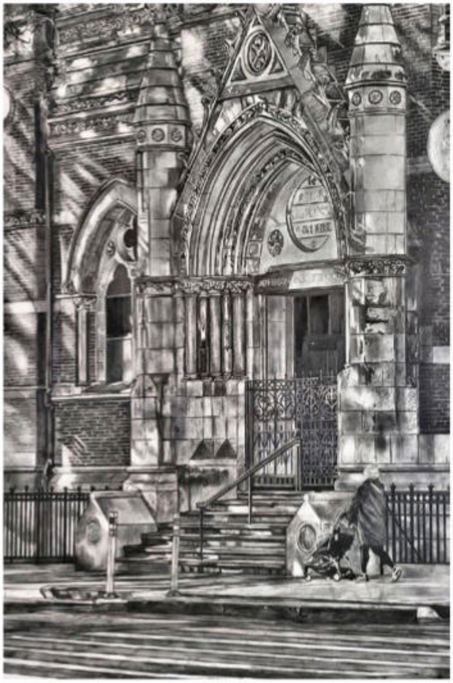
Visual Perception

Lindamood was the Third Prize Winner in International Artist magazine's Challenge No. 143 Cityscapes.

Texas-based graphite artist Patsy Lindamood expertly captures the perspectives and architectural elements of the buildings and city scenes she depicts. For instance, take a look at her drawing *Shadow Play*, which illustrates a bottom-up view of a fire escape on a brick building. A signature member of the International Guild of Realism, American Artists Professional League, Allied Artists of America, American Plains Artists, Artists for Conservation and Society of Animal Artists, Lindamood's drawings have garnered her numerous awards and have been juried into exhibitions across the United States and Canada.

While the artist has an extensive oeuvre in wildlife art, Lindamood's focus has evolved in recent years to a passion for various subjects—everything from streetscapes and apartment buildings to grain silos and abandoned homesteads to courthouses and cathedrals.

"When the visual language is reduced to lines, shapes and values, the underlying story becomes more poignant, more arresting," says Lindamood. "Absent the romance of color, working in shades of gray is like telling a short story versus writing a novel. I strive for my graphite art to evoke story and emotion, to resonate with both recollection and recognition. My work is representational but not photorealistic. The maker's mark is evident in my work, but the overall impact is more that of a painting than a drawing. My work is not about visual perfection. It is about visual perception." ●



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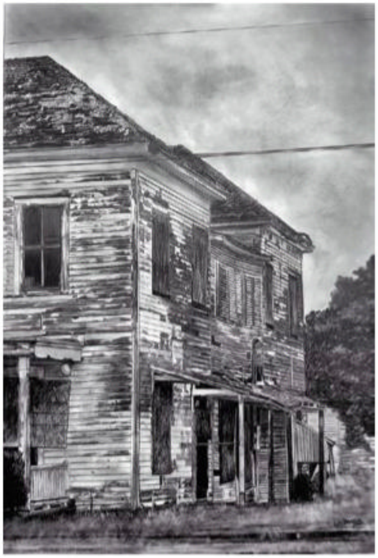

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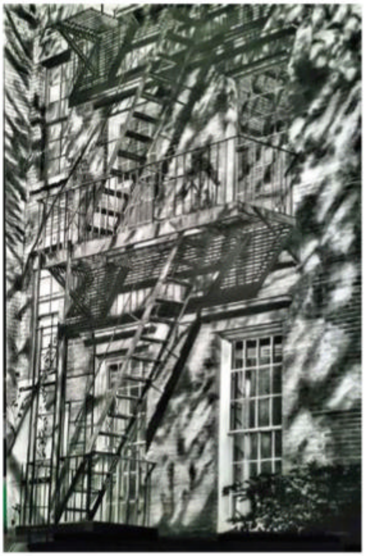

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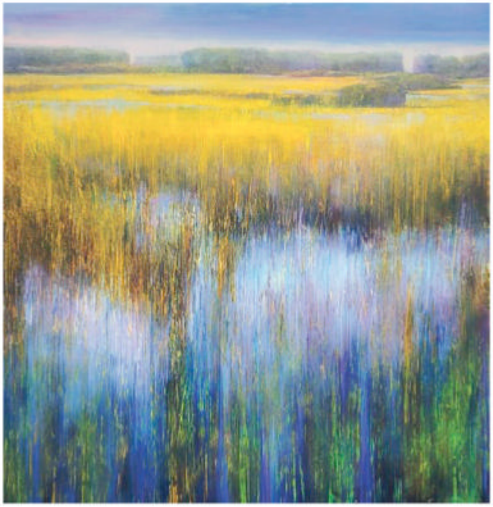
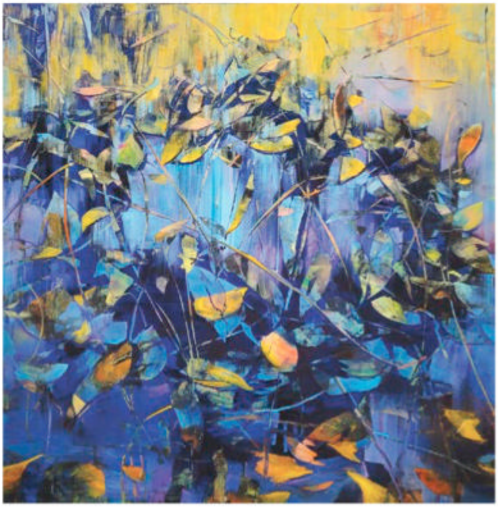
1
Through this Door to the World, graphite, 36 x 24"

2
Shuttered, graphite, 36 x 24"

3
Shadow Play, graphite, 36 x 24"

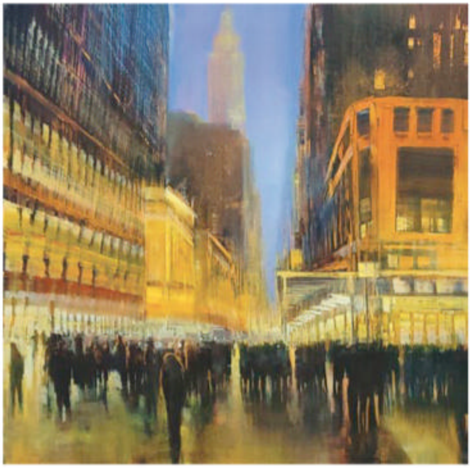


Susan Powell Fine Art, *Luminous Tranquility*, oil on brushed gold laminated aluminum, 48 x 48", by David Dunlop.



Susan Powell Fine Art, *River Wreath*, oil on brushed laminated aluminum, 48 x 48", by David Dunlop.

David Dunlop



Susan Powell Fine Art, *Moving Toward the Chrysler Building*, oil on brushed gold laminated aluminum, 24 x 24", by David Dunlop.

What does it feel like when sunlight stretches across a marsh? How does color shimmer on the surface of drifting leaves? How do the lights of a city merge into a glowing symphony? Can a painting convey the luminance changes we experience in nature? These are the kinds of questions that inform artist David Dunlop's work.

"Radiance—revealing it, reveling in it, exploring it—that is my quest," says Dunlop.

Dunlop's new solo show, *Quest for Radiance*, is a dynamic exploration of light, movement and perception. Dunlop layers semi-transparent pigments on reflective surfaces to create a spectrum of effects that evoke the way we visually immerse ourselves in nature.

"I incorporate the Purkinje effect," he explains, "where cooler colors intensify and warmer tones recede in dimmer light. Balanced with value contrasts, my paintings remain vibrant in both bright and low light, allowing the viewer to experience shifting times of day in the same painting."

Dunlop's paintings come alive before the viewer's eyes. Blending realism with abstraction, and drawing from science, art history and plein air observation, he paints the experience of light in motion—sunlight, reflections, shifting skies and glowing cityscapes. Depending on the light and when you view them, the paintings invite contemplation and can reveal something different each time.

Dunlop's solo show opens at Susan Powell Fine Art gallery in Madison Connecticut, with an artist reception on June 6 from 5 to 8 p.m., and continues through July 6.

Want to See More?

www.daviddunlop.com

Represented by Susan Powell Fine Art
679 Boston Post Road | Madison, CT 06443
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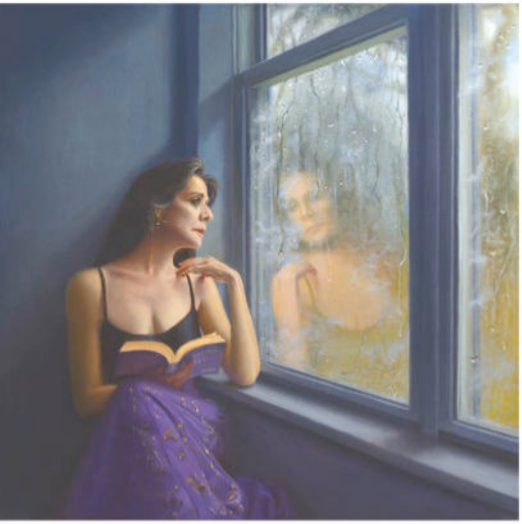
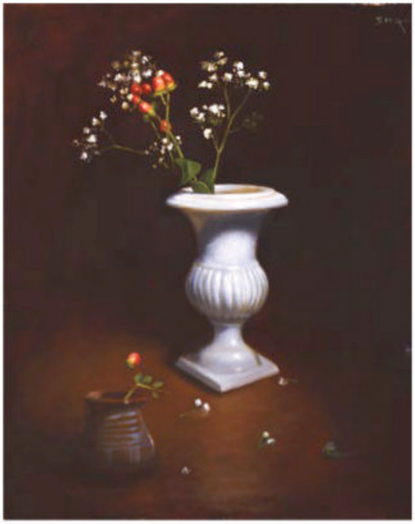
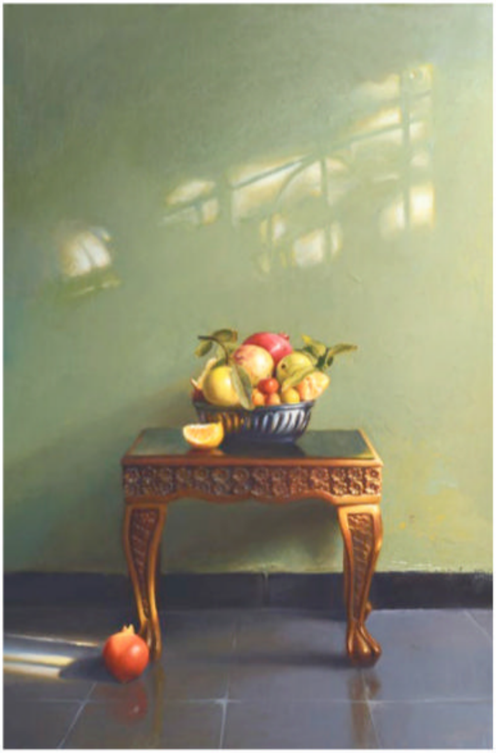
Find me on:
@daviddunlopartist





Far Left: *Reflection*, oil on linen, 36 x 36"

Left: *White Vase*, oil on linen, 20 x 16"



The Fallen Fruit, oil on linen, 36 x 24"

Sivananda Nyayapathi

Sivananda Nyayapathi draws inspiration from the natural world—the woods, waterfalls, rivers and sunsets—as well as everyday common objects like a table, chair or vase. "I like to observe and capture the way the light plays on all these objects," says Nyayapathi. "I like to depict them realistically, to create an illusion of three dimensionality on a two-dimensional surface."

For instance, in *The Fallen Fruit*, "the intricately designed table lit by natural light in the front room of our parental home in India caught my eye," says the artist. "I tried to capture the play of light on the table and on the wall. The placement of the pomegranate on the floor helps move the viewer's eye around the painting."

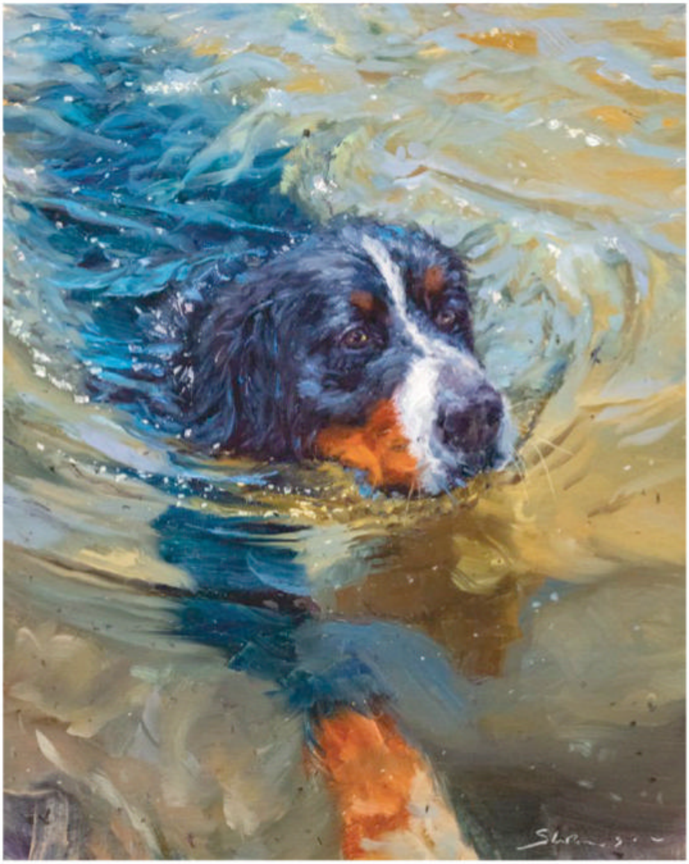
Nyayapathi had given the white vase to his art students as an exercise to practice painting from life and the arrangement, with the lighting, inspired him to paint the scene himself. "The painting *Reflection* tries to capture the mood of the model," explains the artist about his portrait. "On a quiet rainy day, the person is reading a book on philosophy and reflecting on her own life. I feel very satisfied that I could capture what I was looking for."

Nyayapathi is part of an exhibition on view through June 7 at Quinlan Visual Arts Center in Gainesville, Georgia. Visit www.quinlanartscenter.org or the artist's website for details.

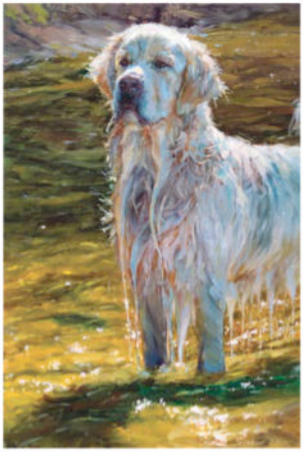
Want to See More?

(770) 495-9069 | www.sivanandafineart.com

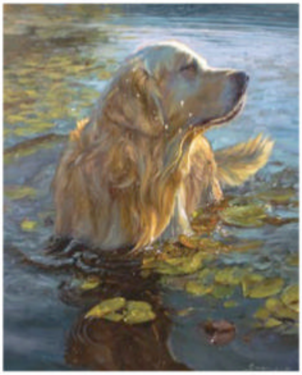
Find me on: siva.nyaya



Breaking Away, oil, 20 x 16"



One Wet Dog, oil, 30 x 20"



Sound of Silence, oil, 30 x 24"

James Swanson

Collectors admire James Swanson's work for its loose, fresh feel. "Up close, my paintings may look like a jumble of colorful brushstrokes, but from a distance, they come into focus beautifully," says Swanson. "This magical transformation has been my goal since I left my illustration career to escape the rigid product renderings that felt like work."

Painting freely is now Swanson's passion, building on skills he has developed over the last 30 years. "My evolving style perfectly captures the joy of my swimming dogs," he shares. "My *Water Dog* series is simply about me and my beloved dogs enjoying the water together. Bjorn, our English cream golden, loves fetching balls and sticks, always competing with our other golden, Fenrir.

The phrase "paint what you know" really resonates with the artist. "I paint my best friends who are constantly by my side," he shares. "Creating paintings that bring joy to others is incredibly fulfilling, much like spending time with my furry companions."

Swanson is represented by James Ross Fine Art in Indianapolis, Indiana; Illume Gallery West in Philipsburg, Montana; Cole Gallery in Edmonds, Washington; Reinert Fine Art and Sculpture Garden Gallery in Charleston, South Carolina; Marine Arts Gallery in Bonita, Florida; and Mackinac's Little Gallery in Mackinac Island, Michigan.

Want to See More?

www.jamesswansonfineart.com

Find me on:

James Swanson Painting @jamesswansonartist

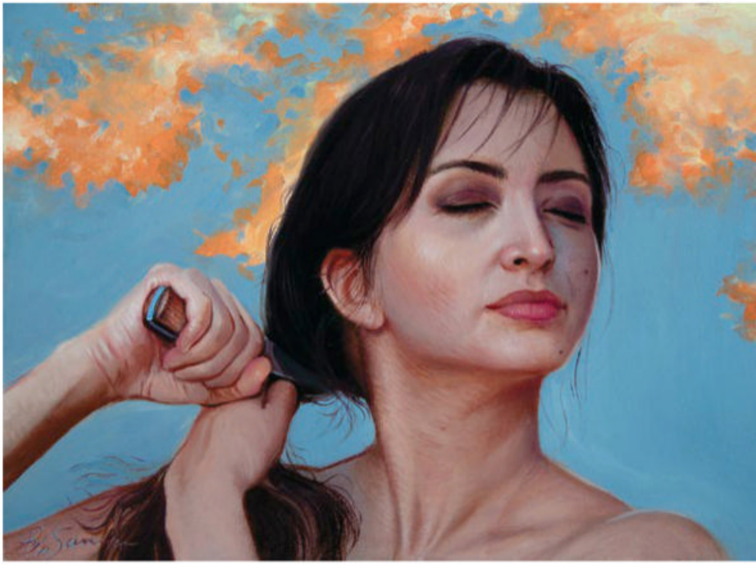
swansonartist.bsky.social

SOLD!

American Art Collector magazine has changed the way artists, galleries and collectors connect. It has closed the gap that previously existed in the traditional art market. Spectacular and instant SOLD! stories keep rolling in. Check out some of the highlights of the sales and connections achieved from the pages of our magazine and throughout the market.

1 A painting inspired by the extinction of a rare bird resonates with a Principle Gallery collector

For Love or Vanity? by Laura E. Pritchett sold out of Principle Gallery in Charleston, South Carolina. The painting was inspired by a special species of parrot called the Carolina Parakeet that went extinct in 1918, largely because of the fashion industry's high demand for their colorful plumage. "These birds were unique, explains Pritchett. "In addition to their vivid, tropical beauty, brightly contrasting most North American forests and fields, they had a rare instinct to stand by their flock-mates at all costs...the moment a member of their flock was injured and unable to fly, the rest would change course, descend and cover the vulnerable bird in an attempt to protect it from further harm. The story of how the world lost these parakeets struck me," Pritchett continues. "What if, instead of valuing them simply for their beauty and harvesting them to add to our own vanity, we'd admired them most for the intrinsic way they cared for one another?"



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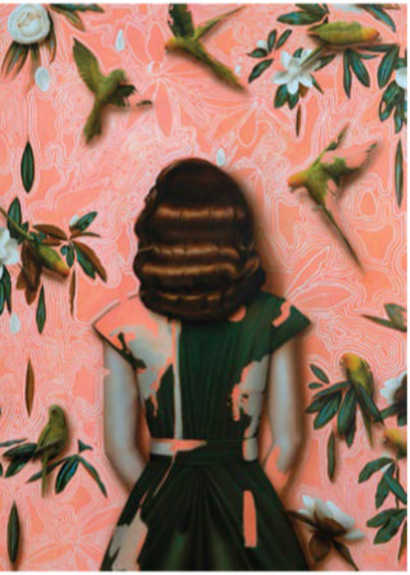

1

2 Small works prove popular in 33PA's April online show

Pegah Samaie's painting sold to a collector who saw the small-scale portrait in the April issue of *American Art Collector* magazine. Samaie's painting *Woman Life Freedom* was part of *Mini-Mi,* an online show presented by 33 Contemporary and 33PA on the Artsy platform. Samaie is an American-Iranian representational artist who was born and raised in Tehran, Iran. She moved to the United States when she was 30 years old and uses her art as a tool to navigate the experiences she and other women have encountered in a culture dominated by patriarchal governments and traditional households. *Woman Life Freedom* is part of a new series that explores what it means to be a woman in Middle Eastern culture. Samaie eventually learned to use her past experiences consciously and subconsciously to express the reconciliation she is making with all the storms of her life. In rising from the wreckage and painting issues related to women's rights, she is recovering, reclaiming and redesigning what it means to be a woman. ●

1
Laura E. Pritchett, *For Love or Vanity?,* acrylic on panel, 48 x 36". Courtesy Principle Gallery, Charleston, SC.

2
Pegah Samaie, *Woman Life Freedom,* oil on ACM panel, 5 x 7." Courtesy 33 Contemporary, Lake Worth Beach, FL, and 33PA.

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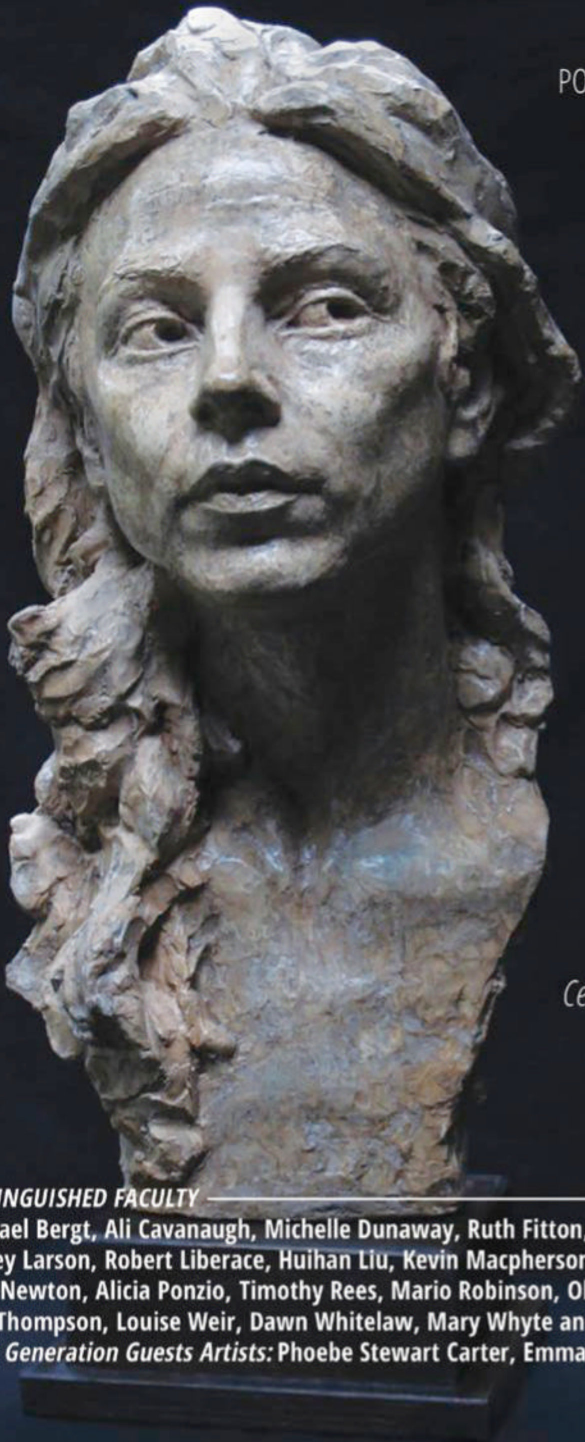

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Alicia Ponzio, *In Recent Days*, 22x9x10", stained plaster

ERIC ROMERO

¿Yo Soy!, New Oil Paintings, May 30 – June 13, 2025 — Santa Fe
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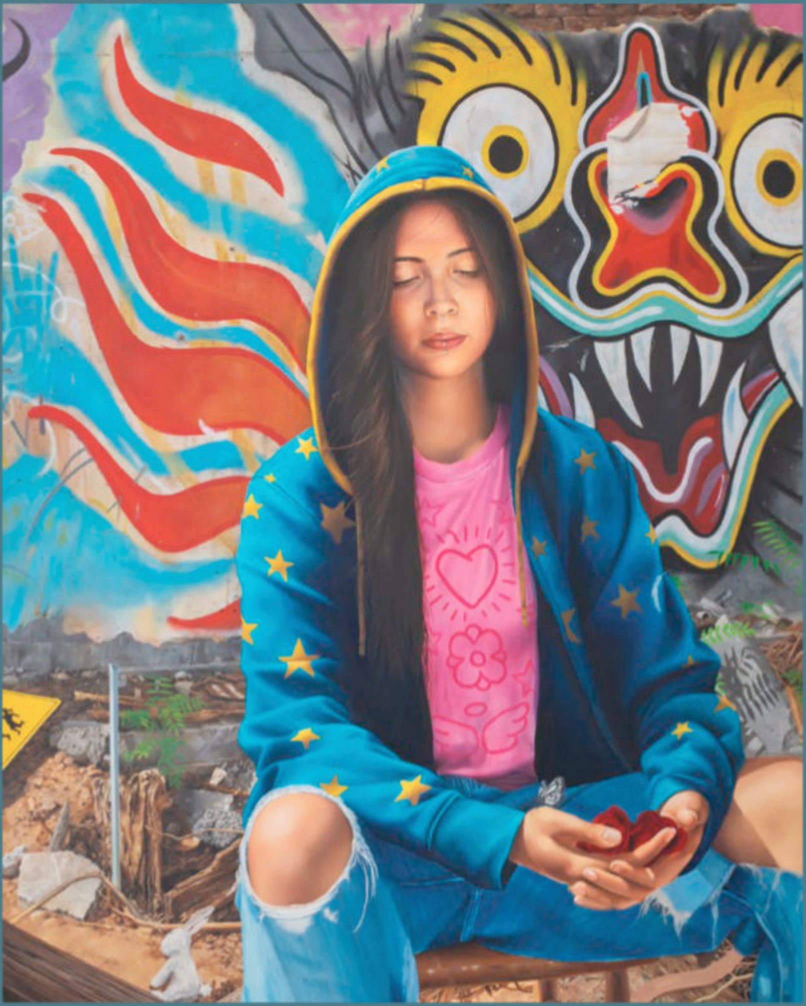

Flor y Fuego, oil on canvas, 60"h x 48"w

Blue Rain
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